



PROVINCIAL OMBUDSMAN

ANNUAL REPORT 1999

SASKATCHEWAN

promoting fairness





Provincial Ombudsman

The Honourable Ron Osika
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Province of Saskatchewan
Legislative Building
REGINA, Saskatchewan
S4S 0B3

Dear Mr. Speaker:

It is my duty and privilege to submit to you and to the Members of the Legislature, in accordance with the provisions of section 30 of *The Ombudsman and Children's Advocate Act*, the twenty-seventh Annual Report of the Provincial Ombudsman.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara J. Tomkins

OMBUDSMAN

promoting
fairness

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Statistics

Things Were Fine in '99

1999 was another good year for the office. We did more work, more quickly than in any other year since I've been with the office. And we expect to do even better in the future.

The backlog, calculated in this manner, is 109 lower than it was only two years ago.

We received a total of 4,292 complaints. Of these, 2,299 were within jurisdiction - a new record, if only slightly over the record set in 1998. Despite continuing high numbers, our efforts to reduce the backlog of public complaints have been effective. Since 1998, when additional resources were allocated on a temporary basis and with the implementation and refinement of our alternative case resolution process, the difference between the number of complaints received for investigation and the number of investigations completed has been substantially reduced. The backlog, calculated in this manner, is 109 lower than it was only two years ago.

I've said publicly and repeatedly that our investigation resources would be adequate to manage our current workload if we were able to eliminate the backlog of complaints. With the reduction of backlog that we have achieved in recent years, I was satisfied that this view was correct. However, there was another aspect of our work that I believed was neglected.

Investigations on the Ombudsman's Own Motion are an essential part of an Ombudsman's work. These investigations involve the review of issues which, most commonly, are brought to the Ombudsman's attention through the media and those identified from patterns of and recurring individual complaints. Own Motion investigations often involve major and systemic issues and require a substantial investment of time and resources. It was my view that we were not able to undertake these investigations

without compromising the gains that had been made in the timely completion of the investigation of individual public complaints.

I therefore sought and received additional resources to allow us to dedicate one full-time position to Own Motion investigations. This has allowed us an opportunity to take on the review of conditions of custody in provincial correctional centres - an undertaking which would not have been reasonably possible in years prior to 1999. And we will be able to investigate other issues of major significance on an on-going basis. This certainly enables us to better achieve all of the purposes of the office.

The office still struggles to recover from years when resources were simply inadequate for the work required. However, we are making progress year by year and that is more than I would have expected a few years ago. We're not there yet but we're well on the road.

Another Five Years!

I was honoured, in April 1999, to be re-appointed by the Legislative Assembly for a second and final term as Ombudsman for Saskatchewan. My first term was, for me, exciting and rewarding; it was gratifying to receive the members' endorsement by way of the offer of re-appointment.

In a sense, this is for me a new beginning. The security afforded by the re-appointment allows me to consider new initiatives and goals which were postponed or perhaps even foreclosed by uncertainty as my term drew to a close. It also allows me, of course, to continue the work begun in my first term.

I am very much aware of the support I received from the members of the Legislative Assembly, government employees, the public and my staff during my first term. It was invaluable to me and I look forward to working with and for them all during my final term.

KUDOS CONTINUED

In this report, I have continued my practice of extending the kudos of my office to named individuals in the public service who have made exceptional effort and shown real commitment to the fairness concepts promoted by my office. These kudos will be found scattered in the margins of the report.

Case Summary

Let's Look at Both Sides

Lucille said that her van was stolen and the thief "blew" the engine. But SGI refused to repair it. Lucille thought this was unfair and complained to my office.

Our investigation revealed that there were two major issues in determining whether or not to accept Lucille's claim. Although the vehicle was registered to Lucille, she said that she had sold it to her brother Malcolm and the vehicle was in Malcolm's possession - although not registered to him - at the time of the alleged theft. So the first question was who was the true owner of the vehicle and the second question was whether the youth was using the vehicle with Lucille or Malcolm's consent or whether he had stolen it.

The police officer preferred the evidence of the youth.

The police had investigated. They brought Malcolm and the youth together to discuss the incident. According to Malcolm, the youth initially said that Malcolm had given him the keys to the car. When Malcolm denied this, the youth said instead that Lucille had given him the keys. The police officer preferred the evidence of the youth and concluded, therefore, that he had permission to operate the vehicle. Therefore, there was no theft and no charges were laid against the youth.

By this time, a claim had been made to SGI and SGI had to consider the same issues - ownership of the vehicle and the alleged theft. SGI attempted to contact the three principal parties and other witnesses. While Lucille responded, the others didn't. Discussions between SGI and Lucille were limited to the question of vehicle ownership. Once that was sorted out, SGI was left with only the police's information about the alleged theft. And that information was inadequate to support the allegation that the vehicle had been stolen.

On being advised that her claim was denied, Lucille contacted a lawyer. In sworn statements, Lucille and Malcolm each stated that they had not loaned the vehicle to the youth. In fact, they stated that there was only one set of keys and Malcolm had them. Lucille could not have given the youth the keys and Malcolm had, from the outset, denied doing so. Despite this new information, SGI maintained its original decision. They said that it was too late to reconsider the matter.

SGI decided that Lucille's claim should be covered.

I thought that this was unreasonable in the circumstances. While I will usually accept that there must be time limits for many claims and programs, and I also accept that government cannot manage if all claims are virtually open-ended, it seemed that in this case SGI was admitting it had made a critical decision without all of the necessary information and that it had played a part in not securing that information in the first place. I so advised SGI.

A member of SGI's legal section reviewed the claim and agreed that it had not been handled well. The matter was reviewed again in light of the new information and SGI decided that Lucille's claim should be covered. Needless to say, Lucille and Malcolm were delighted when they were reimbursed the cost of replacing the engine.

All names used in case summaries included in this report are entirely fictitious; they are not the names of the people who brought the complaints to the attention of this office.

Back to the Basics

In each of my annual reports, I have included information about various aspects of an Ombudsman's role and an Ombudsman's fundamental characteristics. I think it may be time to get back to the basics and provide an overview of the institution.

In creating an Ombudsman, government declares to the public its intention to act in a manner that is not only lawful but which is also fair. The creation of an Ombudsman includes, implicitly, an acknowledgement that lawfulness and fairness are distinct concepts which together, I think, constitute justice. I agree with Lord Denning (1955) when he said, in his book, *The Road to Justice*:

Thence I ask the question, What is Justice? . . . How does man know what is justice? The nearest we can get to defining justice is to say that it is what the right-minded members of the community - those who have the right spirit within - believe to be fair.

So the institution of Ombudsman is about justice.

In creating an Ombudsman, government also declares that it is prepared to submit its actions and decisions to objective scrutiny. By not only allowing, but requiring, the Ombudsman to report publicly, government renders itself accountable, both for the decision scrutinized and for its subsequent decision whether or not to accept the Ombudsman's conclusions and recommendations.

So the institution of Ombudsman is about accountability.

An institution directed at both justice and accountability - the pillars of a mature democracy. What a concept! How does it work? An Ombudsman is an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly who reports publicly about the objective investigation of complaints of

unfairness in the decisions and actions of provincial government departments, boards and agencies and makes recommendations for rectification when unfairness is found. Within this brief definition, one finds five fundamental characteristics of an Ombudsman: independence, objectivity, investigation, recommendation power and public reporting.

Without independence, one cannot truly be an Ombudsman.

Independence is a critical characteristic. Without independence, one cannot truly be an Ombudsman. Independence is secured through a number of factors. First, in Saskatchewan, the Ombudsman is appointed only upon resolution of the members of the Legislative Assembly. Thus, I am an employee of the Legislative Assembly, not the government that my office investigates.

Second, my terms of employment are legislated, rather than left to the discretion of government or for negotiation between me and any authority. My salary is set in legislation, as is the manner of determining increments or decreases. So also, my term of office is set out in legislation. These provisions can only be removed or changed by a vote of the Legislative Assembly. Thus, my independence is fundamentally protected. In this respect, I am referring to the fact that I am able to undertake my work without fear of personal repercussion in the event that I tender an unfavourable conclusion and without promise of personal benefit in the event of a favourable one.

I am no less responsible to government than I am to the complainant.

Objectivity is another of the essential characteristics of an Ombudsman. Working objectively requires that I am not the citizen's advocate nor am I the government's advocate. This is perhaps the least understood aspect of Ombudsman; many people - both government and public - believe that I am or ought to be the citizen's advocate

KUDOS

Here's to Ron Forberg, Income Security Supervisor, Department of Social Services, Moose Jaw, for his assistance with a detailed investigation and his willingness, always, to listen to the complainant's side of the issue.

and that it is my responsibility to advance the citizen's cause. In this, they could not be more wrong. It is an Ombudsman's responsibility to gather all information relative to a complaint and objectively assess whether the complainant was treated fairly. I am no less responsible to government than I am to the complainant.

However, an Ombudsman is an advocate but only in the sense of advocating for fairness. Thus, I will recognize and applaud fair treatment by government as strongly as I will pursue fair treatment for those whom I think were denied it.

Through investigation, an Ombudsman considers lawfulness and fairness and so, seeks justice.

Investigation is the essential part of an Ombudsman's work. It is through the objective investigation of complaints that I am able to identify instances of unfair government practice or policy and so it is through investigation that I am ultimately able to achieve change. Through investigation, an Ombudsman considers lawfulness and fairness and so, seeks justice.

Recommendation power is another of the characteristics of Ombudsman. An Ombudsman recommends actions government might take to rectify an identified unfairness but cannot require government to undertake those actions. In fact, were I able to do so, I would, by definition, cease to be an Ombudsman. This power of recommendation, coupled with the obligation to report publicly, leads to government accountability.

Public reporting, the last of the characteristics listed, is no less important than the others. As Ombudsman, I am and must be empowered to report about the work of my office and my conclusions and recommendations as I see fit, without direction or interference. Without the power to report publicly, the effectiveness of the office would be substantially diminished. The element of accountability would be removed and, without that element, our opportunity to secure change would likely be reduced.

So there you have it. A relatively simple concept that secures for legislators, for government and for the public, thoughtful consideration of matters of justice and accountability. A heck of a deal.

Case Summary

Help! I'm in No Man's Land

Robert was a Manitoba resident who owned and farmed land in both Manitoba and Saskatchewan. He suffered flood damage to his Saskatchewan land in the spring of 1995 and applied for compensation from Saskatchewan's Provincial Disaster Assistance Program. His claim was denied as he was not considered a resident of Saskatchewan. Robert complained to my office.

We learned that the Provincial Disaster Assistance Program (PDAP) was a federal/provincial program administered in Saskatchewan by the Department of Finance. While PDAP is offered and partially federally-funded in all provinces, each province is allowed to set its own eligibility criteria, subject to certain basic rules set out in the federal/provincial agreement. While Manitoba did not include a residency requirement among its eligibility criteria, Saskatchewan did. Since Robert was resident in Manitoba, we concluded that his application was properly rejected.

However, I was troubled by the inconsistency between the administration of the program in Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

However, I was troubled by the inconsistency between the administration of the program in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, especially respecting an aspect that may not have been particularly relevant to a claim. That is, a resident of Saskatchewan who owned land in Manitoba would be eligible for PDAP from Manitoba, but Robert, whose circumstances were reversed, was not

KUDOS

Our thanks to Charlene Nelson, Business Supervisor, SaskPower, Regina, for her dedication to solving complaints. She's not discouraged by details and the need to locate and review old records.

eligible in Saskatchewan. And it seemed to me that, depending on PDAP's purposes, the relevance of place of residence might be questionable.

In the course of our investigation, responsibility for administering PDAP was shifted to the Department of Municipal Affairs, Culture and Housing. I asked that department to reconsider the residency requirement, while recognizing that any change would not affect Robert personally.

The initial response from the Department gave reason for optimism. It was noted, however, that this program was shared with the federal government and that any changes would have to be considered in the broader context of the federal program. It was suggested that this might take some time.

On this basis, I concluded my file respecting Robert's complaint as not substantiated. I did follow up with the department from time to time to learn whether changes to the eligibility requirements would be forthcoming. As of the time of writing this report, the residency requirement remains.

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Case Summary

The Cost of Incorrect Information

Eric was a little bit peeved when he called my office. He was supposed to pay maintenance for his children, and, while there had been a garnishee placed on his bank account to obtain those funds, the matter had been resolved with the Maintenance Enforcement Office (MEO) and he was told that the garnishee had been removed from his account.

He was surprised and angry when he learned that the cheque had bounced.

A couple of weeks later, he deposited funds to his account to be sure that his monthly SGI plate payment would be covered. He was surprised and angry when he learned that the cheque had bounced and SGI warned that if this happened again, he would lose the privilege of paying monthly. On top of that, the bank had assessed a \$19.00 charge for processing the NSF cheque. Eric found out that the MEO's garnishee summons had not been removed and, as a result, the money he had deposited was forfeited in satisfaction of the summons.

Eric talked to the worker at MEO and suggested that the whole situation arose because of MEO's mistake in telling him the garnishment had been lifted when it had not. He suggested MEO should let SGI know that it wasn't Eric's fault that his cheque bounced and that MEO should pay the NSF charge. The worker at MEO declined to do so.

When my Complaints Analyst contacted the Maintenance Enforcement Office, she received confirmation that the garnishment wasn't lifted until almost a month after Eric had been told it would be gone. It seemed to us, then, that Eric's position was sound in that he had acted reasonably based on what he was told and that the difficulties stemmed only from the inaccurate information. And it seemed to us that the resolution Eric had proposed was a reasonable one.

MEO advised that they would send Eric a letter explaining the error so that he could clear his name with SGI and, in addition, that they would reimburse him the amount of the NSF charges.

Review of Saskatchewan
Correctional Centres

KUDOS

Hats off to Brian Merk, Adjuster,
Saskatchewan Government Insurance,
Regina, for his willingness to
reconsider a position and find solutions
to difficult problems.

As my previous annual reports attest, I have been interested in the number and nature of complaints my office receives from inmates in our provincial correctional centres. As is the experience of all Canadian provincial Ombudsman offices, a large proportion of the complaints we receive come from inmates – 22% in my office in 1999. While I have no doubt that the investigation of these complaints on a case-by-case basis is valuable for both inmates and Corrections, I thought that a major review from a broad perspective might be of equal, if different, value. For twenty-five years, my office has been looking at the trees; it seemed to me that it was time to look at the forest. During 1999, therefore, we began a major review of conditions of custody in Saskatchewan's four major provincial correctional centres.

For twenty-five years, my office has been looking at the trees; it seemed to me that it was time to look at the forest.

I intend that this review will be somewhat different from our usual investigations. It will be undertaken as a more collaborative process involving inmates, staff at all levels of Corrections and other organizations interested in corrections practice. Thus, while the final report and recommendations will be mine, I am hopeful that their development will be a collaborative process and that the final report will be, insofar as is reasonably possible, consensual among the participants.

To solicit and secure that approach, we engaged in discussions with Corrections officials and staff to develop Terms of Reference that would ensure a thorough review. In addition, we solicited the participation of agencies like Elizabeth Fry Society, Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, John Howard Society,

Metis Nations and the federal Corrections Division. All were anxious to participate.

Our purpose is not specifically or only to identify short-comings.

The Review is also different in that it is not based on any specific complaint or allegation. Instead, we are hopeful that consideration of international standards and the experience of other jurisdictions might lead us to principles that can guide my office and Corrections in our work. While we will note and make recommendations respecting short-comings we may identify in Corrections practice, our purpose is not specifically or only to identify short-comings. I have previously commented on Corrections' commitment to fairness, including fair process. This Review does not minimize those comments. It is my hope that our review will support Corrections' commitment and assist in its work.

Our Terms of Reference set out fourteen areas which we intend to examine. These are:

1. the use of segregation;
2. the discipline process;
3. living conditions;
4. staff's understanding of rule of law, the duty to act fairly and inmate rights;
5. inmate safety;
6. bedspace availability and location;
7. case management system and practices;
8. correctional centre-based programs;
9. programming for aboriginal offenders;
10. medical services available to inmates;
11. inmate property control;
12. staff training as it relates to the provision of offender services;
13. the incidence of suicide and self-injury; and
14. services to remand offenders.

As the Corrections Review is an extensive project undertaken through a new and more complicated process, it is difficult for me to predict its progress with certainty. We are currently projecting completion in the late summer or fall of 2000.

Process: More than a
Means to an End

In considering whether or not a decision is fair, my office places considerable emphasis on the process through which the decision under review was reached. Too much emphasis, some say. They wonder why, especially if we conclude that the decision was a right one, we are concerned with the process by which it was made. This opens a philosophical Pandora's box: Does the end justify the means? People much wiser than I have discussed that question for centuries and I won't here enter the fray. But I will say unequivocally that in an Ombudsman's work, the end will not justify the means nor will the means justify the end.

Does the end justify the means?

In reviewing a decision, I consider whether the decision was lawful, whether it was fair and also - as an element of both of those considerations - whether it was reached through a fair process. That fair process is sometimes referred to as "natural justice" or "administrative fairness". In a nutshell, a consideration of fair process involves measuring the manner in which a decision was reached against the following:

- Was the person affected advised that a decision would be made?
- Was the person affected given the information that would be considered in making the decision?
- Was the person affected given an opportunity to provide his or her own information and to challenge the information already in the decision-maker's hands?
- Was all relevant information considered in reaching the decision?
- Was the person affected notified and given the reasons for the decision?

KUDOS

We appreciate the work of George Roensau who gave priority to an urgent complaint and, in consultation with staff at the Workers' Compensation Board, secured the reinstatement of a complainant's benefits.

Some might ask, if the decision itself was right, why I would be concerned about inadequacies in the process by which it was reached? The answer is quite simple. A fair process will increase the likelihood of sound and supportable decisions in all cases. The fact that a decision-maker has reached a supportable decision through an unfair process in one case does not provide any assurance that the decisions will be sound in other cases. A decision reached through an unfair process cannot be fair. A fair process is a safeguard for fair decisions.

*A fair process is a safeguard
for fair decisions.*

Most of us have heard - in fact, many of us have uttered - the old expression "Justice must not only be done but must be seen to be done." I think that the expression is undoubtedly correct and our consideration of fair process is a consideration, in effect, of whether justice can be seen to be done. Where a process is hidden or, while visible, is unfair, we are all sceptical of the decisions reached through that process. Thus, a fair process is important in securing the public's confidence in and acceptance of decisions and even entire programs.

There is a cost to unfairness.

For the practical-minded among my readers, I note that the requirement for fair process is far more than philosophical. There is a cost to unfairness. If the process is not fair or is not seen to be fair, there is a greater likelihood that decisions will not be accepted. Instead, there will be appeals and reviews; these are certainly costly both in money and time. Programs and policies may be viewed with suspicion. If so, government can expect to expend considerable effort to regain the public's trust. Better to do it right in the first place.

Both lawfulness and fairness require, to use a current cliché, a "level playing field". That's what fair process is all about. It's an assurance that all parties know in advance what the rules are, that all parties will play by the rules, and that the rules

will apply equally in every game and on every play. Most of us are able to accept decisions – even unfavourable ones – if we are confident that they were reached in a fair manner. If the process was fair, it is much more likely that the decision will be sound. I must, therefore, consider process in determining if a decision is fair. It's a fundamental part of a fair decision.

Case Summary

A New and Important Program

Young Tara was having a few problems but they were not insurmountable. Her language skills were not as good as might be expected from a child of her age and her general social development was somewhat delayed. Tara was assessed by specialists who suggested that she would benefit from attending a day-care on a regular basis. Staff there could help her develop language and comprehension skills and the association with other children would assist in the development of social skills. Tara's mom, Monica, enrolled her in a local day-care.

The department said it could pay the parent's portion of day-care fees if day-care was the parent's need but not if it was the child's need.

Now Monica had a problem. She was a young mom who was on social assistance and, like any low-income parent, would have a portion of Tara's day-care fees subsidized. However, there remained a portion for which the low-income parent is usually responsible. In order to find the money to do this, Monica had to cut back on her expenditures for basic needs, such as food. The amount available to social assistance recipients for food and other necessities is near subsistence; Monica found that the compromises that she was required to make in order to find the money to pay the day-care fee were creating a real hardship for her and her children.

She requested that the department supplement her assistance by the amount of the day-care cost. When the department refused her request, Monica complained to my office.

Social assistance to cover the parent portion of day-care fees is generally available to parents whose obligations require them to place their children in day-care. But the department said that there was no policy in place which would allow such a supplement where the child needed to go to day-care independent of his or her parent's obligations. If parents are unable to care for their children for part of the day because, for example, they are working or going to school, the department will cover the parents' portion of the cost. But if, as in Monica's case, the parent could care for the child full-time but the child needed day-care for other reasons, departmental policies did not enable them to pay that cost. In effect, the department said it could pay the parent's portion of day-care fees if day-care was the parent's need but not if it was the child's need.

I thought that it was short-sighted for the department to decline Monica's request. The specialists who had "prescribed" day-care for Tara suggested that a year in day-care would assist her development to such a degree that she might not require special assistance when she started school the next year. Without day-care, it was almost certain that she would require a Teacher's Aid at school. Setting aside the obvious benefits to Tara personally, the cost of the parent's day-care portion was minimal (\$65 per month) when compared to the cost of a Teacher's Aid for a year or more after Tara started school. In addition, of course, the longer it took Tara to "catch up", the more likely that she might face other behavioural/social problems which would require the attention of medical, educational and other professionals in future years.

To me, common sense dictated that the department should cover this cost. And I thought that there was flexibility in some department policies which would enable the payment of the parent's portion of

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KUDOS

Kudos to Lori Sandstrom-Smith, Crown Counsel, Department of Justice, Regina, for arranging the immediate resolution of a complaint, in advance of her consideration of the larger questions it raised. Her interest in securing a solution, instead of offering red tape, is an example of good public service.

day-care fees in Monica and Tara's case. I recommended that the department make that payment.

The department remained of the view that they simply did not have the authority, within existing programming and regulation, to generally make payments of this nature in these circumstances. They did agree, however, that policy did allow the payment of these costs for a child who was the subject of a protection file. Since Tara was under a protection file for part of the time in question, the parent's portion of the fee would be paid for that period of time.

When you can pay a little now or a lot later, most of us would opt to pay now.

When you can pay a little now or a lot later, most of us would opt to pay now. I suggested that if the policies didn't allow payment in Monica's circumstances, consideration should be given to developing a program that would. Because it was apparent throughout our discussions that the department was sympathetic to the issue, I was optimistic that they would do so.

Although it took longer than I would have wished, my optimism was justified when the department advised that it had created an appropriate policy. Effective September 1, 1999, when a child of a social assistance recipient is professionally assessed to require a day-care placement and if that child is placed in a licensed day-care facility, the parent's portion of the cost will be paid through the department's Day Care Branch.

Although my office was able to provide only limited assistance to Monica personally, her complaint led to the development of a new program which will benefit many other children and their parents.

Where are the Ministers' Reports?

The Ombudsman's Annual Report is intended to provide an overview of the Ombudsman's role and the work of the office during the year under review. It has traditionally included, therefore, statistics about complaints received and concluded, an overview of developments in the office and information about the institution.

We also include a collection of summaries of cases that were investigated during the reporting year. These are intended to provide an indication of the kinds of issues that came to our notice and of the conclusions that we reached. It follows, therefore, that we would report all cases which were reported to a Minister of the Crown as these are cases which, by the fact of that reporting, raised issues which I believed were of significance and of public interest. My predecessors and I have always done this. Yet no summaries of cases which were reported to Ministers are included in this Annual Report.

Don't panic. They're coming.

In 1999, we reported an unusual number of cases to Ministers of the Crown. If I were to include summaries of them all in this annual report, two circumstances would result: First, this report would be so long that I fear it would not be read with the thoroughness and attention I think it deserves. Secondly, the lengthy report would be much more costly to produce than I (and those who fund this office) would like. It seemed to me that there was a solution which would address both of these problems.

Therefore, cases which were the subject of Ministers' Reports will be reported in a separate Special Report which will be tabled in the Legislature during the spring 2000 session, shortly after this report is tabled. I will be interested to consider comments on the convenience of this practice. If they are positive, this perhaps novel idea could become a new tradition.

Annual Conference

The 1999 annual conference for Canadian Ombudsman was a little different than it has been in previous years. Instead of the usual small gathering of Canadian legislative Ombudsman and members of their staffs, the 1999 offering was an international conference jointly hosted by the Canadian Ombudsman Association and the United States Ombudsman Association.

Howard Kushner, my British Columbia counterpart, was our host - a rather daunting task considering he had taken office only a few months earlier. About 160 Ombudsman from Canada and the United States attended an interesting and varied program covering topics of interest to both countries. Sessions on privatization, human rights and privacy were of particular interest to me.

As is always the case when traditions change, there was some loss and some gain.

The work of this office was recognized by a request that I give a paper describing our new Alternative Case Resolution process. I think the paper was well received. In addition, our two Ombudsman Assistants (ACR) demonstrated one aspect of alternative case resolution in a mock mediation. Susan Griffin and Renee Gavigan put a great deal of time and thought into this demonstration and another member of my staff, Arlene Harris, had a moment in the limelight as an actor in the demonstration. Congratulations to them all for a job well done!

As is always the case when traditions change, there was some loss and some gain. I missed the close association the smaller forum has offered Canadian Ombudsman. On the other hand, we found many opportunities for collegiality among ourselves and I truly enjoyed meeting so many others. The field of Ombudsman is rather small and it was great to expand my circle of acquaintances in the field. And many of

those with whom I became acquainted in Victoria, I now consider friends.

My thanks to Howard and his staff for a good conference and a great time!

Case Summary

A Difficult Decision

Dwayne was a very troubled young man who was in the care of the Department of Social Services for most of his life. He had serious behavioural problems, the most disturbing of which were evidenced by repeated inappropriate and predatory sexual behaviour.

In his late teens, Dwayne was a resident at a group home operated by the department. While there, he received psychiatric treatment. As part of that treatment, the psychiatrist requested that Dwayne keep a journal. Eventually, that aspect of the treatment was discontinued because it was felt that the experiences and desires which Dwayne had recorded actually fed and inflamed his deviant thoughts. The journal was confiscated. Dwayne thought that the journal had been lost until it was mentioned in the course of a recent court hearing. He asked the department to return the journal but the department refused. He complained to my office.

This case was deeply troubling for me and my staff.

This case was deeply troubling for me and my staff. The principles by which such a decision should be guided indicated that the journal should be returned. First, Dwayne was no longer in the care of the department. Secondly, the journal was Dwayne's property but, more than that, it was his writing and his thoughts. On the other hand, all psychiatric opinion indicated that Dwayne remained a serious danger to others and access to his delusional and erotic writings might render him more immediately dangerous.

KUDOS

Our appreciation to Tracey Houston, Saskatchewan Employment Supplement Program, Department of Social Services, Regina, for her time and patience in explaining the program to Ombudsman staff and for her efforts to resolve a number of complaints for clients of the program.

I concluded, nonetheless, that Dwayne was entitled to his personal writings. I was comforted in this conclusion by the fact that at the time Dwayne came to us, he was an adult resident in a psychiatric treatment facility for seriously mentally-ill adults. Thus, if the journal was provided, it would be subjected to scrutiny by professionals where he resided and access could be denied if they considered it inadvisable or improper. I therefore recommended that the department return the journal.

The department did not agree. Officials were firmly of the opinion that the journal constituted part of Dwayne's treatment and was part of the file. Because the department and my office were not able to find a resolution to this disagreement, I suggested to Dwayne that he could apply for release of the journal pursuant to *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. I have not been advised whether or not he took this step.

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Case Summary

He Waited and Waited But Nothing Happened

Aaron was an inmate in a Saskatchewan correctional centre but wanted a transfer to a Manitoba facility. He was originally from a community near the Manitoba centre and many of his family still lived there.

In addition, he was familiar with the Manitoba centre because he had been an inmate there. He knew that if he resided at that centre, he could take classes from a nearby college and continue his studies there after he was released. Most important, he had been attacked by a number of inmates in the Saskatchewan centre and so, for his own protection, had to serve all of his time in segregation on

23 1/2 hour lock-up. He felt that he was being penalized for being beaten up by people he didn't even know in a fight he didn't instigate.

On this basis, Aaron applied for a transfer to Manitoba. When the application was denied, Aaron asked my office to investigate.

We learned that Aaron's information was correct. His options for rehabilitation and personal development in Manitoba were far greater than in Saskatchewan because, it appeared, he would have to continue to serve his time in Saskatchewan in the very restricted environment of solitary confinement. It seemed to us that his circumstances should have led to serious consideration of his transfer application and we were interested to learn the reason it was denied.

We were surprised when we found out. There was no reason because Aaron's transfer application was never considered.

We asked the centre to complete and consider the application. The centre did so but remained reluctant to approve the transfer. We gathered further information - some refuting allegations against Aaron and some supporting his position. With this new information, the transfer was approved and Aaron was transferred to Manitoba.

I commend the department for its willingness to acknowledge its error and to consider new information with new eyes.

While the transfer didn't occur until a long time after Aaron's application, the department acted quickly after we brought the matter to its attention. I commend the department for its willingness to acknowledge its error and to consider new information with new eyes.

The Pros and Cons of
Public Reporting

Public reporting is one aspect of my work that I find particularly interesting and challenging. As Ombudsman, I am required to make at least one public report annually; hence, this, my annual report. However, I am authorized to issue other reports - either about specific cases or about issues or relating to the operation of the office - as I think appropriate. The challenge for me is reporting at such times and on such matters as to ensure that the purposes of the office are most effectively achieved.

The Office of the Ombudsman receives and investigates complaints against the provincial government and, when a complaint has merit, makes recommendations to rectify any unfairness found. This, in itself, is valuable work but its true value is far more broad than the review and rectification of individual complaints. The institution of Ombudsman is an important element in the scheme of government accountability.

The Ombudsman's power to recommend is fundamental to government accountability. That is, if an Ombudsman could order or otherwise compel government to take action to rectify unfairness, accountability would be transferred from government to the Ombudsman. A recommendation, however, leaves to government the decision to accept and implement the recommendation or not. And government is then accountable for that decision.

However, accountability without public knowledge is impossible.

However, accountability without public knowledge is impossible. Unless I publicly report my conclusions and recommendations and government's response to them, government is not called upon to account. This is why the concept of transparency is usually linked with accountability, whatever the context.

Thus, to achieve full accountability, I should - at least theoretically - publicly report every conclusion of unfairness in every case and the government's responses thereto. I do not do this, nor does any Ombudsman.

Why not? First, there's the practical aspect. Were I to do this, the report would be so long that it would defeat its own purpose; few, if any, would read it.

Next, reporting every conclusion is unproductive. For example, where an issue is restricted to the particular circumstances of an individual, is unlikely to recur and is rectified by government, it serves little purpose to report the case publicly. Reporting every such case would, in effect, "muddy the waters" and important issues might not be noticed.

Finally, I think reporting all cases where unfairness was found would present an inaccurate picture of government. While we do pursue government when its work falls short, there are more cases where we find that government acted fairly. I would be acting unfairly toward government if I reported all cases but only those cases where unfairness was found.

I see the Ombudsman's role as one of promoting necessary change in a constructive manner.

I am not interested in embarrassing government (and, incidentally, myself) in this manner. I see the Ombudsman's role as one of promoting necessary change in a constructive manner. I believe that purposeful but limited public reporting achieves the best balance.

The cases summarized in my annual reports are carefully selected. I ensure, first, that all major issues and major complaints pursued during the year are presented. The remainder of the cases reported are examples of the kinds of issues we raised and government's responses - both positive and negative - to those issues.

KUDOS

A round of applause to a crowd - Conrad Olson (Regina), Wayne Harris (Swift Current) and Don McInnes (Assiniboia), who are employed at Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management and, from the Department of Agriculture and Food, Valerie Townsend-Fraser (Weyburn) and Alan Syhlonyk (Regina). These folks brought professionalism and commitment to a complex dispute and worked toward a responsible and creative solution.

All complaints which were drawn to a Minister's attention by way of a formal Report and Recommendations are reported publicly. The fact that they were presented to a Minister indicates that they involve conclusions of unfairness that I considered significant.

In addition, I may issue public reports separate from the Annual Report in appropriate cases. For example, I anticipate that the length and depth of the Corrections Review undertaken this year will dictate a separate public report.

I intend for my reports to provide a fair reflection of the work that government does and the work that my office does. If so, government can be held accountable for its actions and decisions and my office works effectively. And that's the balance I am trying to achieve.

Case Summary

A Little Talking, A Little Listening, A Little Understanding

Gerald, a correctional centre inmate, was calling my office every day and as often as six times a day with a variety of complaints about his treatment at the correctional centre. His numerous vague and indiscriminate complaints were not helpful for the centre, for my office or even for Gerald himself. Internal appeal processes available at the correctional centre were not being used and this eliminated the possibility that the centre could expeditiously correct any problems. My office simply does not have the resources to receive and consider the number and nature of complaints that Gerald was lodging - at least, not within a reasonable time frame. Both of these circumstances resulted in Gerald's complaints not receiving the attention that they might have deserved.

I contacted the Team Leader of Gerald's unit to discuss Alternative Case Resolution and find out if the centre might be willing to meet with Gerald to see if a better understanding of expectations on both sides might resolve some of Gerald's concerns. Centre staff were definitely interested. They wanted to clarify roles and processes with Gerald and they wanted to see if Gerald could be led to take more responsibility for his actions.

We made the same offer to Gerald. After providing some information that we thought would help him to organize his thoughts and develop a respectful manner of expressing his views, Gerald agreed to meet with his Team Leader.

With the guidance of the Ombudsman Assistant (ACR), Gerald and the Team Leader had a frank and productive discussion. Gerald gave details about the kinds of problems he was encountering and the Team Leader explained what had been done in response to some of Gerald's previous complaints. It became clear that this information had not been provided to Gerald before, though the Team Leader thought that it had been. He apologized to Gerald for the oversight. The fact alone that the Team Leader apologized gave Gerald a new-found confidence in the value of information and advice provided by the Team Leader.

He did not make any complaints at the centre and he did not call our office.

During the meeting, roles, responsibilities and expectations were clarified. Gerald and the Team Leader agreed upon a reasonable process for raising and examining concerns. At the conclusion of the meeting, both parties said it had been helpful. But "the proof is in the pudding", as they say. And that proof came when, over the remaining 15 days of Gerald's sentence, he did not make any complaints at the centre and he did not call our office. I am confident that this would not have been the case if Gerald and centre staff had not taken the opportunity to talk and, more importantly, to listen to each other.

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Legislative Amendment

In each of my 1995, 1996 and 1997 Annual Reports, I have proposed amendments to *The Ombudsman and Children's Advocate Act*. I was, therefore, very pleased to hear in the December 1999 Throne Speech that our Act would be amended during the 1999-2000 session. I am, of course, hopeful that the amendments proposed will protect and enhance the independence of the office and allow it to do its work more effectively and efficiently.

For example, the current Act includes many provisions which are safeguards to the Ombudsman's independence: appointment by the Legislative Assembly, remuneration set in legislation and a fixed five-year term, renewable once. However, I believe that independence would be enhanced if the latter was instead set as a fixed, non-renewable ten-year term. Strengthened security of tenure cannot help but strengthen the actual and perceived independence of the incumbent. In addition, one fixed ten-year term would eliminate the lengthy period of uncertainty during the incumbent's fifth year and post-renewal, when the activities and initiatives of the office are necessarily restricted.

Next, I believe that our investigation powers would be enhanced by clarifying the definition of "agency of government" to more clearly include or exclude various vehicles for the delivery of government services. At present, the determination of jurisdiction is, in some cases, reliant on a technical, legal interpretation of the Act.

Similarly, our ability to conduct effective investigations would be enhanced if the legislation was amended to clarify the extent of our exemption from the provisions of *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. At present, documents prepared by or in the possession of the office are exempt, but their status is less clear once they leave our hands. It would enhance the confidentiality necessary to our work,

and, thus, advance another important principle, if it were clear that documents prepared by my office but held by government agencies retained their exempt status.

Over the years of my incumbency, I have proposed a number of other amendments of a more 'house-keeping' nature. I will not detail these. They are amendments which would allow us to work more effectively, for example, by removing certain procedural requirements in appropriate cases.

Saskatchewan's legislation is, in many respects, one of the strongest pieces of Ombudsman legislation in Canada.

Saskatchewan's legislation is, in many respects, one of the strongest pieces of Ombudsman legislation in Canada. Its framers recognized and accommodated the principles of Ombudsman by providing independence to the incumbent, broad powers of investigation and clear authorization for public reporting. I am confident that the legislators will bear those principles in mind as they consider amendments to *The Ombudsman and Children's Advocate Act*.

A Boost of Confidence

A couple of years ago, my office investigated Connor's complaint about his workers' compensation claim. We concluded that the matter could be best addressed by a Medical Review Panel, and the Workers' Compensation Board had agreed to offer one, based on new information we had provided.

Connor simply did not trust them and viewed anything they told him with suspicion.

Now Connor complained that the Workers' Compensation Board would not provide him with the list of doctors

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to choose from for the Panel. He also presented a number of other issues that arose from his dealings with the Board and his suspicions about the Panel's ability to be impartial. It had reached the state that he was no longer able to talk to people at the Board - not because they wouldn't provide the information he sought, but because Connor simply did not trust them and viewed anything they told him with suspicion. Communication had broken down and frustration on both sides was high.

As it turned out, Connor had not applied for a Medical Review Panel at all. He had not requested a list of doctors. So the Board had not refused the request. Basically, while Connor said that he wanted to have the review, he refused to participate in the process that was necessary to secure it.

By talking with Connor, my Ombudsman Assistant (ACR) was able to identify his fears and help find a way to address them. It appeared that Connor didn't understand how a Medical Review Panel worked - what would happen, how he could participate, who made the decisions and how Panel members were selected. He was afraid that the Panel would be somehow structured in the Board's favour. Fundamentally, he was afraid that the Panel would not support his claim.

By providing clear information, we addressed all but the last of Connor's fears. We consulted both the Workers' Compensation Board and staff at the Workers' Advocate Office to obtain necessary details and to confirm the process. This information was given

to Connor at length and in detail. In addition, we provided the names of contacts at both agencies who, we assured Connor, he could trust to give straight answers to any other questions he might have. Connor said he was comfortable with the information and the contacts. This may not sound like much but it was a major step forward. Prior to our involvement, Connor was unable to obtain information on his own because virtually all of his attempts had ended off-track and in anger.

Connor's final and underlying concern - that the Panel might not support his claim - is one Connor shares with virtually all compensation claimants who will be assessed by a Medical Review Panel. But Connor was now able to base his decisions on clear information from trusted sources, without interfering emotion and without irrelevant considerations. Regardless, this was not an easy decision for Connor to make.

He's since advised that he made the application.

Case Summary

Equal Opportunities for Farm Kids

Dan is a farmer who was receiving Social Services benefits. He said that, like many farm children, his kids raised calves. But when they sold them, the income was included by the Department of Social Services as family income. Dan said this wasn't fair because city kids often earn a bit of income from paper routes or part-time jobs and the department doesn't include that money in its calculation of family income.

We thought that this was not fair because it discriminated between farm and city families without reason.

KUDOS

A special mention for Chris Hudon, corrections worker at White Gull Camp, whose understanding of and appreciation for fairness lead to a willing review of complaints and good solutions for complainants.

Our review confirmed that the policy did not allow an exemption for farm children's income from raising animals. We thought that this was not fair because it discriminated between farm and city families without reason. We suggested that the department reconsider the policy. Unfortunately for Dan, however, we did not recommend a resolution for Dan's specific complaint because the circumstances did not indicate that Dan himself treated the income in question as his children's income. For example, his own income tax return showed the cattle in question among his assets and the proceeds of their sale as his income.

We were pleased when the department revised its policies to allow the exclusion of income to farm children who raise farm animals for sale in the calculation of family income.

Case Summary

A Foster Home Closes

Alice complained to my office that the Department of Social Services closed her foster home after one of the foster children alleged abuse. Alice maintained that the abuse allegations were unfounded and motivated by the spite of a teen-aged girl. She felt that the department had not adequately considered these factors when it made the decision to close her home.

The young woman had nowhere to go and Alice could not turn her away.

Our investigation showed that Alice had fostered children for the department for over ten years. While her identified strength was in caring for younger children, she had taken in teenagers from time to time and reports about the care she provided them were positive. However, Alice's son became a teenager and she recognized the difficulties that can arise when non-related teenagers of the opposite sex are in close proximity to

each other. She suggested that placements of older children (i.e. over ten years) might be limited to boys. Nonetheless, she was willing to foster any and all children who needed care.

Eventually, Alice found herself fostering Karen, a teen-aged girl, and things were going well. Then Connie, another teen-aged girl who had previously resided in Alice's home, arrived at her door. Connie said she had nowhere to live and that the department had not offered her a placement. She asked Alice to take her in. Alice was reluctant and the social worker objected, but, thinking that the young woman had nowhere else to go, Alice could not turn her away. Connie and the department, albeit reluctantly, signed an agreement for Connie's care in Alice's home.

Within weeks, Connie made an allegation that Alice's son had made unwanted sexual advances to her on several occasions. She was immediately removed from the home and the matter was investigated. The department concluded that Connie and the son had been involved in an inappropriate relationship, though one which was as much at Connie's instigation as at Alice's son's. Before a final decision was made about whether the home would remain open, another incident arose which eventually led to the son being charged with assault by Karen. Given this, the home was closed.

In our investigation, it became clear that Alice had not made a wise choice when she accepted teen-aged girls into her home. There were also indications that Alice had, before the complaint was made, certain information about the relationship between her son and Connie but she didn't disclose this to the department. In Alice's defence, however, it appeared that she was caring for these children in the best way she knew how. She did not think that workers were interested to hear about every issue that occurred in her home and she had, in the past, coped with difficult teenagers and difficult situations with positive results.

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KUDOS

Joe Pylatuk, Team Leader, Regina
Provincial Correctional Centre gets the
nod for his open door and open mind.
He's always willing to listen and to put
time and effort into finding solutions to
inmate problems.

Her reluctance to disclose the information was also influenced by the fact that the department had not wanted to place Connie in her home in the first place. Alice was afraid that if the department became aware of the problem, they might remove Connie but not offer to place her in another foster home.

I did not challenge the department's decision to close this home; it was the only reasonable decision available. However, I did think that the department could have foreseen that difficulties would arise when they agreed to place Connie in the home. The girl was very troubled and had caused difficulty in other placements. The department was also aware through other sources that issues were arising in the home and they had this information before the critical complaint was made. Even so, no alternative placement was under consideration for Connie; there was no back-up plan. I suggested that this placed Alice in an untenable position - she had to choose between putting her own home at risk or abandoning Connie.

The department disagreed. It took the view that Alice was solely responsible for the problems. They viewed Alice's decision to take Connie in, despite knowledge of potential difficulties, as an inability to say no and make difficult decisions. They also placed great emphasis on Alice's failure to inform workers about incidents in the home.

My staff and I were not able to persuade the department to consider the broader implications of the matter.

Despite several meetings and letters, my staff and I were not able to persuade the department to consider the broader implications of the matter. However, the department did agree that when annual reviews of foster homes are conducted, the workers will seek and include the perspective of natural children in the foster homes. This recognition that these children are also affected by the department's decisions and that they have

a right to be consulted about changes to their family is, I think, important. I see this as one positive outcome of this otherwise tragic case.

Case Summary

A Compassionate View

Carol's mom suffered cardiac arrest while seated in Carol's truck in a mall parking lot. She fell against and out of the door of the truck which caused some damage to the vehicle parked next to Carol's. The owner of that vehicle claimed against his SGI insurance to cover the cost of repairing the damage.

Carol and her husband were surprised when they found that a surcharge had been assessed against them. They found out that SGI imposes a surcharge against people who have more than one vehicle accident claim made against them in a three-year period. Because Carol's husband had been involved in an accident the previous year, the 'accident' in the parking lot led to a surcharge.

We suggested this unusual set of circumstances required compassionate consideration.

My Complaints Analyst contacted SGI. There were two areas of damage to the neighbouring vehicle. The first was caused when the door of Carol's truck was pushed against the other vehicle as Carol's mom fell from the vehicle. The second area of damage might have been caused if Carol's mom's head struck the vehicle or it might have been caused inadvertently by the Emergency Medical Technicians as they attended to Carol's mom. Either way, we suggested, this was a most unusual set of circumstances and one that required compassionate consideration.

Upon review, SGI agreed that the circumstances were exceptional and reversed the surcharge.

Those Pesky
Non-Jurisdictional
Complaints

Every year I report the numbers of complaints received by my office that are beyond our jurisdiction as a provincial Ombudsman office. While many non-jurisdictional complaints are of a miscellaneous nature, two categories are clearly identifiable - complaints against federal and municipal governments.

Sometimes, however, and too often, I think, there is no practical alternative to offer these complainants.

In the course of our work we receive many complaints respecting matters that fall within federal or municipal jurisdiction. As Provincial Ombudsman, my jurisdiction is limited to the investigation of complaints against provincial government agencies and so I am not able to directly assist those who complain against federal or municipal governments. Instead, we attempt to locate some resource for these complainants - perhaps an internal review or appeal available through the federal or municipal program complained about, perhaps a contact person in the federal or municipal agency who might be willing to discuss the matter. Sometimes, however, and too often, I think, there is no practical alternative to offer these complainants.

What's the solution? An Ombudsman, of course! Why an Ombudsman and not some other form of recourse? Quite simply, because the institution has proven to be the best of the alternatives. An Ombudsman provides:

1. an objective and independent forum for the review of complaints;
2. a relatively quick and inexpensive process; and
3. government accountability.

KUDOS

A toast to Gwen Failor, Customer Service Representative, SaskEnergy, Saskatoon, whose interest in finding fair solutions paved the way to a successful mediation.

The Federal Forum

Ombudsman across Canada have, on many occasions over many years, called upon the federal government to create an Ombudsman for Canada. The Canadian Ombudsman Association made such a call as its first substantive official act, renewing the informal calls its members had previously issued. A federal Ombudsman has also been discussed among the Members of Parliament on many occasions. It even made the government agenda on one occasion; unfortunately, the anticipated legislation was not placed before the House. What's the need and why the demand?

In 1999 alone, my office received 326 complaints about federal government programs and decisions. Many of these complainants were aware that we were not able to investigate their complaints; they were simply hoping that we could direct them to someone who could. One can assume that the majority of people with complaints involving the federal government do not call my office. Coupling this assumption with and considering the number of calls my office and other provincial and territorial Ombudsmen receive, it's easy to conclude that there is a very large number of Canadians who are seeking but not finding recourse for their concerns.

I fully support the call for the creation of a federal Ombudsman.

For all of these reasons, I fully support the call for the creation of a federal Ombudsman. The Social Union Framework calls upon government to create mechanisms where citizens can appeal unfair administrative practices and bring complaints about access and service. That's just what an Ombudsman is. And doesn't the year 2000 sound like a great time to bring the benefits of Ombudsman to all Canadians!

The Municipal Forum:

The situation with complaints against municipal governments is basically the same. In 1999, we received 120 such complaints. I think the assumptions given above in relation to federal complaints apply equally to complaints against municipal governments. That is, there are a lot more out there than my statistics alone would indicate. And I think the arguments in favour of an independent forum for their review also applies equally.

The idea of an Ombudsman for municipal complaints is not revolutionary or even novel.

The idea of an Ombudsman for municipal complaints is not revolutionary or even novel. In British Columbia, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, the provincial Ombudsman has jurisdiction respecting complaints against both provincial and municipal governments. So also, in Manitoba, the provincial Ombudsman has jurisdiction to consider complaints against all municipal governments, except complaints against the City of Winnipeg which has its own Ombudsman.

In Saskatchewan, Professor Joe Garcea is chairing a Task Force that is conducting an in-depth review of municipal government structure and powers. I am hopeful that the question of the propriety of the creation of an Ombudsman for municipal government will be part of the public discussion that is anticipated when Professor Garcea reports.

In summary, I think the citizens of this country are entitled to an independent review of matters in dispute between themselves and government. The question, it seems to me, is to determine an appropriate forum for that review. I suggest that the institution of Ombudsman provides that forum.

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Case Summary

It Really Hurts!

Don was having problems with his claim for workers' compensation benefits. He had injured his back at work and was unable to work. The Workers' Compensation Board (WCB), based on medical reports, concluded that Don suffered muscle pain, accepted his claim and paid him benefits while he obtained treatment from his chiropractor over the next four months. The WCB then placed him in an eleven-week rehabilitation program.

Despite the opinions of the chiropractor and a neurosurgeon, Don was not convinced that his injury was simple muscle pain. He did not find that the chiropractic treatments were helping him as one would expect they would if his injury was to the back muscle. The rehabilitation program aggravated, rather than relieved, his pain. Most importantly, he said that the pain came from deep within his back; this would not be consistent with muscle injury.

While nonetheless continuing the recommended treatment, Don sought further medical opinion. His family physician thought that Don had a pinched sciatic nerve and that his condition could only be corrected by surgery to remove a disc from his back. He ordered a CT scan to better assess Don's condition.

The family's financial circumstances were very difficult as they had exhausted their savings and had to obtain loans from family to meet their basic needs.

Don reported the family physician's opinion to the physiotherapist at the rehabilitation program but the physiotherapist did not think that the physician's diagnosis was correct and consulted the physician. Apparently the physician became convinced by the

physiotherapist's view. Therefore, Don completed the rehabilitation program and on its conclusion, WCB benefits were terminated as it was believed that adequate time and treatment had been provided to enable the injury to resolve.

Don felt his condition had not improved and that he was still unable to work. The family's financial circumstances were very difficult as they had exhausted their savings and had to obtain loans from family to meet their basic needs. Finally, Don had no choice but to return to work. He says he truly tried but simply could not work due to his back pain.

Finally, the CT scan results were reported. They confirmed that Don had two damaged discs in his back which were putting pressure on a nerve; the remedy was surgical removal of the discs.

With this information, Don asked WCB to reinstate his benefits and the request was under consideration. However, that would take some time and Don's financial situation had become perilous. He called my office for help.

The Complaints Analyst decided that Don's situation was urgent. To address the immediate problem, she advised Don that he was likely eligible for social assistance benefits while he awaited the WCB's response to his request. She arranged an appointment.

At the same time, she contacted the Workers' Advocate Office and asked them if they would give urgent consideration to Don's situation and see if it might be resolved by informal intervention with staff at the Workers' Compensation Board. They agreed.

I was pleased that my office was able to assist Don in addressing his urgent needs.

Not much later, we were advised that the Workers' Compensation Board had agreed that Don was unable to work due to his back injury and that he had been unable to work since the date of the initial injury. Benefits were reinstated retroactive to the date they had been terminated after Don completed the rehabilitation program.

And Don had been found eligible for and received social assistance benefits during the time that he wasn't receiving workers' compensation benefits.

I was pleased that my office was able to assist Don in addressing his urgent needs – both to obtain a review of his claim with WCB and to secure financial support in the meantime.

Case Summary

A Grumpy Old Man? Maybe Not.

Walter had lived in a seniors' high rise, operated by a Housing Authority for seven years.

He had a car which was inoperable but which remained parked in the lot. Walter had fallen into arrears in the payment of the \$15 per month parking fee and he now owed \$130.00. The Authority advised that if the arrears were not paid in full, they would evict him. Walter disputed the amount the Authority said was owing and, in any event, felt it would be unreasonable to evict him over "a piece of pavement". He called my office.

In discussing the problem with the Housing Authority, we learned that they had already tried to work this out. At one time, they had worked out a payment plan for Walter but he didn't follow through. They saw no purpose, especially given Walter's current attitude, in setting up another one. As well, they were concerned about Walter's behaviour in the building and its impact on other tenants. The Authority felt that it had no option but to give him notice of their intention to evict him.

My Ombudsman Assistant commented that Walter was of the view that he was being evicted for non-payment of his parking stall fees and not because of his behaviour. The Authority admitted that it had not advised Walter of these concerns because many of the residents who had complained did not want Walter to know. Without that consent, the complaints

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could only be considered informal, no investigation could be undertaken and so Walter would not be advised.

It seemed to us that the parties were not communicating; each was operating with only part of the information. We suggested Alternate Case Resolution and both agreed to meet to see if a solution could be found.

The parties were not communicating; each was operating with only part of the information.

The Authority wanted the meeting held in Walter's apartment because some of their concerns related to the condition of the apartment. They knew that an opportunity to view his premises might confirm or allay those concerns. Walter was reluctant to have the meeting in his suite but agreed because, he said, he was interested in working things out. This was an encouraging start.

The meeting provided an opportunity for the parties to put a face to the issues. The Authority learned that some of their concerns about the condition of the apartment and about Walter were unfounded. They gave Walter some information about how his behaviour affected other tenants and Walter accepted this difficult information with a degree of grace.

An agreement was reached. Walter agreed that he owed the amount the Authority had claimed. He paid the arrears in full and the Authority agreed that he would not be evicted.

The representative from the Authority and Walter had not met before. By meeting face-to-face, the Authority rep was able to put in context Walter's behaviour as it related to other tenants. Walter was able to see the Authority through its thoughtful representative, rather than as a faceless tormentor. Both parties believe that they will be able to discuss things more easily and more trustfully now. I think that they are right.

KUDOS

Our compliments to Dennis Stamnes, Corrections Worker, Saskatoon Correctional Centre, whose extra effort enabled an inmate, to make arrangements for his release.

Case Summary

A Dangerous Situation

Penny was in a heck of a mess. She is the single parent of two small children, both of whom are seriously disabled. Penny lives in a remote part of the province and, despite an urgent need because both children occasionally require emergency medical attention, she didn't have a phone. In fact, she had nearly lost her youngest when there was a delay in getting him medical help. Penny receives social assistance.

This recreated the problem.

She frequently has to take her youngest child to a major centre for medical appointments. On one occasion, she ran short of money and had to have some of her meals at the hospital. The hospital billed the Department of Social Services for the meals and the bill was paid. That payment was considered an overpayment to Penny and one which would usually be recovered by small, monthly deductions from her assistance cheques. However, on this occasion, the department recovered the overpayment by reducing Penny's next medical travel cheque. This, of course, recreated the problem; that is, Penny started her next trip with inadequate money to cover the expenses.

My Complaints Analyst contacted the Supervisor of Income Security for the region where Penny lives and explained the situation. The Supervisor called back shortly and confirmed that the information we had received was accurate. She also agreed that Penny had not received appropriate assistance from her worker. The overpayment was reversed by the time of this call and in addition, she had already begun arrangements to secure a telephone for Penny.

When we checked with Penny a few days later, she confirmed that the overpayment had been returned and the phone was on the way. She was ecstatic!

Can We Stuff this Gem
Back into the Bottle?

It's weird about the word "Ombudsman". It's long. It's Swedish. And it's hard to say. Many people don't know what it means. But in this country and around the world, it seems everyone wants to use it. At least, anyone who deals with complaints. OK, I exaggerate, but not a lot.

Why are people so attracted to such an unwieldy and difficult word? Quite simply, because it implicitly carries credibility and integrity. Thus, any office which titles itself "Ombudsman" imports to itself that credibility and integrity.

Among Ombudsman, there is a real fear that the term will become so diluted as to become virtually meaningless.

Especially in the last twenty years or so, and increasingly in recent years, the term has been appropriated by many people whose offices receive and consider complaints - and even some who don't - but who do not carry all of the fundamental characteristics of an Ombudsman. This development, while certainly complimentary to the institution, jeopardizes the very credibility and integrity that is essential for an Ombudsman to function effectively and that attracted these others to use the term in the first place. Among Ombudsman, there is a real fear that the term will become so diluted as to become virtually meaningless.

"Ombudsman" is not a generic term; it has a very specific meaning. Ombudsman offices are established to achieve specific purposes and the academic review of its historical development has established the basic characteristics necessary to enable an Ombudsman to achieve those purposes.

Briefly, an Ombudsman is an independent officer who objectively investigates complaints about administrative actions and decisions

and makes recommendations for the resolution of those found to be substantiated. Some who are called "Ombudsman" are not independent; they are employees of the agency they investigate. Some do not investigate at all; they use the techniques of alternative dispute resolution to resolve complaints. Some are not objective; they are advocates for a particular constituency. In one extreme case, the Ombudsman does not receive or consider complaints at all; he provides information about available programs. All of these people do valuable work but they are not doing the work of an Ombudsman as the word has, at least until relatively recently, been understood.

Practical problems arise when people who do complaint-related work use the title "Ombudsman" but do not hold the fundamental characteristics of an Ombudsman. Our clientele - both members of the public and government staff - become confused. For example, in another province, an in-house complaints review office for a government agency was titled the "[Agency] Ombudsman". Ombudsman usually require that a complainant exhaust statutory and other reviews before coming to an Ombudsman office. Many complainants, therefore, first took their complaints to the Agency Ombudsman. If dissatisfied with the outcome, the complainant would then bring the matter to the Provincial Ombudsman for investigation.

When they did so, however, those complainants brought with them a new perception of an Ombudsman office. They did not expect independence. They said, in effect, "I thought that an Ombudsman was independent but I guess I was wrong since the Agency Ombudsman was not independent and he's an Ombudsman." And so the Provincial Ombudsman would start again the uphill battle of convincing his constituency that an Ombudsman is, indeed, independent. And at the end of that discussion, complainants were still confused. "What exactly is an Ombudsman?" they might wonder. "I guess there are no rules. Sometimes they are independent and sometimes they aren't."

KUDOS

Sandy Korczak, Supervisor, Customer Service, SaskEnergy, Prince Albert, deserves recognition for looking beyond the debt and considering individual circumstances of complainants. Her approach leads to solutions which work for both SaskEnergy and for complainants.

I think the term should be retained for those who meet the "traditional" criteria and I believe the term should be statutorily protected. I am aware of only two jurisdictions that have taken this step - New Zealand and Denmark - but I am also aware that Ombudsman in virtually every jurisdiction support, if not actively promote, such protection in their jurisdictions.

One has to set the cork before that genie escapes.

The situation in Saskatchewan is not critical at this time as very few here have appropriated the word "Ombudsman" for their offices. So why now? I think for the very reason that the situation is not yet critical. It seems to me that the time to address the issue must be before the practical implications arise. And that is before the proliferation begins. As it almost certainly will. Experience has shown that this is one genie that can't be put back into the bottle. One has to set the cork before that genie escapes.

I therefore invite the Members of the Legislative Assembly to consider an amendment of *The Ombudsman and Children's Advocate Act* to include a provision reserving the title "Ombudsman" for those who meet the characteristics of Ombudsman as the word is currently used and understood in this province. Saskatchewan has long been a leader in promoting human rights and rights-based institutions. We have an opportunity to lead again. I encourage the members to do so.

Case Summary

Sometimes There's A Difference Between What's Legal and What's Fair

Andrew had been working for the District Health Board for a few months in one position when an opportunity arose for a position in another area. He bid on the position and was successful. After

working in the new position for a few months, he was told his hours were being cut back. He was not expecting this and approached the CEO to learn the reason. The following day, he was terminated - ostensibly because his performance did not meet expected standards.

Andrew was shocked. In his time in the new position, nothing negative had been said about his performance. In fact, he was able to produce evidence that all the feedback he had received respecting his work in both positions was positive. He appealed to the CEO and the Board, both of whom supported the authority of the Human Resources Department to terminate him. The decision stood.

Instead, he was simply summarily dismissed.

We decided to investigate. We found that the alleged short-comings in Andrew's performance had been recorded shortly before his termination but none of them had been brought to Andrew's attention. Instead, he was simply summarily dismissed.

The question for us was whether the Board had acted fairly.

The Health Board admitted the procedures it had followed were not ideal but it steadfastly maintained that it was legally entitled to proceed as it had. We agreed that the Board could legally proceed as it did, a fact that it verified before the termination. The question for us was whether the Board had acted fairly.

We concluded that Andrew had not been treated fairly. He had not been advised that his work performance was not considered satisfactory, what areas required improvement or the nature of improvement the Board desired. Nor had he been given an opportunity to address the short-comings. Thus, while the Board's decision was lawful, it was not fair. We so advised the Board and made recommendations to rectify the situation. Because reinstatement was no longer a practical possibility, we proposed that:

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- Andrew receive a written apology for his termination;
- he termination not be considered should Andrew seek employment with or a reference from the Health Board in future;
- employees involved in the termination be excluded from involvement in the consideration of any application for employment Andrew might in future make with the Health District; and
- Andrew receive nominal compensation for the damage to his reputation and employability and for unnecessary distress.

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At the conclusion of almost two years of discussions, the Health Board agreed to all recommendations except the payment of compensation. And it took another year before the apology was finally provided.

This is not the first time a government organization has agreed to only those recommendations that bear no cost. I think that this is not fair play.

This is not the first time a government organization has agreed to only those recommendations that bear no cost. I think that this is not fair play. Complainants who have been treated wrongly deserve to be put in a position which best minimizes the effects of the unfairness. Sometimes - and I believe Andrew's case is a good example - compensation is the only way to achieve that end. One cannot be accused of being unreasonably cynical about the government's sincerity when it accepts that it has acted unfairly but refuses to implement difficult or troublesome recommendations.

On a more positive note, even before our recommendations were tendered, the Health Board revised its policy regarding probationary employees. The revised policy includes a fair process for situations where employees are not working to an acceptable standard. Henceforward, employees will receive notice of areas where improvement is required and will receive assistance and an opportunity to improve.

Case Summary

Read the Fine Print? I Can't Read the Large Print!

Jim was more than a little upset when he called my office one day this spring. He was a social assistance recipient and had received a document from his worker that he thought might be important but which he couldn't read. The difficulty was that Jim's first language was French and he spoke and read English only hesitantly. He asked the worker to have the document translated for him. But the worker advised that it was Jim's responsibility to find his own interpreter. Jim couldn't arrange a translation and didn't think it should be his responsibility to do so.

My Complaints Analyst contacted the office of French-language Co-ordination. They advised that the matter required a legal opinion as to the department's responsibility to provide interpretation and translation services for its clientele. We then spoke to the department's counsel.

The lawyer recognized that Jim couldn't wait for an answer to the larger question and asked the Department of Social Services to arrange for the immediate translation of the document. She also undertook to review the broad issue and to consult with the department about its obligations respecting translation and interpretation services.

A few days later, we were advised that the department's long-standing policy and practice was to provide translation and interpretation services as required by its clients. While an error had been made in advising Jim that it was his responsibility to get a translation, the error was not a common one and was quickly rectified.

Canadian Ombudsman
Association

In my 1998 Annual Report, I announced the formation of the Canadian Ombudsman Association (COA) in June 1998. Our small association has grown and progressed rather dramatically, I think, since then.

One of our first initiatives was to call for the creation of a federal Ombudsman. As I have set out elsewhere in this report, all provincial and territorial Ombudsman receive many complaints that are beyond their jurisdiction. In some cases, we are able to direct those complainants to statutory or federal internal appeals. But too often, we think, we cannot propose any reasonable and practical recourse for those individuals.

We hope to meet with the federal Minister of Justice next year.

As an informal group, we have called for a federal Ombudsman on many occasions over many years in the past. Our new association has taken active steps to promote this initiative. We prepared a Discussion Paper describing the characteristics of an Ombudsman and our case for the creation of a federal Ombudsman. This paper was distributed to all MPs, Senators and federal legislative officers. As follow-up to this distribution, Roberta Jamieson and Douglas Ruck, Ombudsman for the provinces of Ontario and Nova Scotia respectively, travelled to Ottawa as COA representatives and met with MPs, Senators and members of their staffs. They found a genuine interest in the proposal. We were encouraged by the response they received and intend to pursue the initiative further in the coming year. We hope to meet with the federal Minister of Justice next year.

Our membership has grown quickly. Starting with only 13 members in 1998, we now boast over 80 members. This expanded

membership has led to another of our initiatives. Some associate members - those who do not meet the classical definition of Ombudsman we have adopted as the criteria for voting status - have challenged that approach. A committee of COA voting members, some individuals and representatives of other interested associations is considering alternative structures for COA membership.

The COA and United States Ombudsman Association jointly held an international conference in Victoria in October. Information about the conference is provided elsewhere in this report.

The COA participated in the debate and discussion about the American Bar Association's work in developing a new definition of Ombudsman. We provided a written submission supporting the classical definition and secured a position on the ABA Steering Committee. Our work on this initiative continues.

Finally, we created and have now published three editions of our COA newsletter.

I think you'll agree that we've done quite a lot for a young and small association of very busy people. The energy and commitment of our members is really impressive. And along the way, we find time for a few laughs and a lot of collegiality. As President of the COA, I commend my colleagues.

KUDOS

We'd like to acknowledge Florence Peterson, Financial Worker, Department of Social Services, Buffalo Narrows who leaped into the breach to help a client in difficult circumstances.

Case Summary

**Good Work Compensates
a Bad Deal**

Meaghan was considering buying a used car in a private sale. Before doing so, however, she asked SGI about the vehicle's accident history. When SGI advised that the vehicle had been registered in Saskatchewan previously and had not been involved in any accidents, she went ahead with the purchase.

Imagine her surprise when she learned that the car had been written off as a total loss!

Shortly after the purchase, Meaghan took the vehicle to the dealership for some warranty work. Imagine her surprise when she learned from the dealer that the vehicle's warranty was no longer valid because the car had been in an accident in British Columbia and had been written off as a total loss!

SGI had discovered a loophole in its process.

Meaghan tried to contact the person who had sold her the car but could not find him. She then went to SGI and inquired how the vehicle came to be registered in Saskatchewan when it was, in fact, a total loss vehicle from British Columbia. SGI found out that the car had come into Saskatchewan as "settler's effects" and so was not subject to an inspection or the payment of sales tax. SGI had discovered a loophole in its process.

Meaghan said that she had relied on SGI's information about the vehicle and that if she had known its history, she wouldn't have purchased it. Instead, she had acquired a vehicle of substantially lesser value than what she paid for it, not to mention the corresponding uncertainty about its reliability. She requested that SGI repair the vehicle to a standard that would enable it to pass an inspection or purchase the vehicle from her for the amount she had paid for it. When SGI denied her request, Meaghan came to my office.

Our review of SGI's policy and practice showed that, generally, vehicles coming into Saskatchewan from outside the province cannot be registered unless they pass an inspection. However - and here's the loophole - vehicles brought into the province as part of the property of someone moving here were exempted from this policy. In Meaghan's case, the problem was compounded by the fact that the fellow who brought the vehicle in had not owned it for more than 30 days and if SGI staff had paid closer attention to the detail of the documentation he provided, this fact would have been disclosed. If this had been detected, the vehicle would not have been considered settler's effects and the exemption would not have applied.

Even though the seller of Meaghan's vehicle misled SGI when he declared the vehicle as settler's effects, the loophole created by the exemption would have enabled the situation to arise in other situations even without the lie. My Ombudsman Assistant suggested to SGI officials that they did bear responsibility for Meaghan's situation. Recognizing the unfairness in this case, SGI officials agreed. They purchased the vehicle back from Meaghan and refunded the insurance premiums she had paid. A final solution was achieved when SGI changed the policy so that inspection is now also required for vehicles entering the province as settler's effects.

I applaud SGI for taking this initiative to ensure fairness to the other affected individuals.

Our investigation of Meaghan's complaint led to further investigation by SGI. They learned that the individual who sold this car to Meaghan had done the identical thing twelve other times. While they reported the matter to police, they also approached the owners of the other twelve vehicles and made arrangements to either repair their vehicles or purchase them outright. I applaud SGI for taking this initiative to ensure fairness to the other affected individuals, none of whom was even aware that they had been duped!

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Budget comparison

The following table compares the approved budget for the Provincial Ombudsman for 1999-2000 with the preceding two years:

	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Salaries	\$724,000	\$964,000	\$998,000
Other Expenses	\$271,000	\$298,000	\$330,000
Total	\$995,000	\$1,262,000	\$1,328,000

Case Summary

It May Not Make Sense But It's the Rule

Geraldine has several medical problems and sometimes requires the use of a wheelchair. She was unable to work and had been in receipt of social assistance for many years. She had been referred for training but was unable to complete courses sponsored by the Department of Social Services because, due to illness, she could not attend on the required regular basis. The department's Work Preparation Centre, which assists recipients to identify and pursue appropriate training, concluded that Geraldine was not a candidate. She was, instead, considered unemployable.

Geraldine didn't accept this view and wasn't ready to give up. She believed that if some accommodation could be made for the limitations imposed by her illness, she could upgrade her skills and obtain work. She located a private college which offered a flexible learning schedule, enabling students to work at their own speed. This, she thought, was perfect for her situation. She registered for a computer course and obtained a student loan. In light of the loan, her social assistance was terminated.

The amount she received from student loans was inadequate to cover the family's needs.

She soon learned, however, that the amount she received from student loans was inadequate to cover the family's needs. Tuition at the private school was higher than that for most institutions and Geraldine's expenses for prescription drugs and other medical treatment were higher than average; thus, the family's needs were higher than what the student loan program contemplated. Geraldine applied for social assistance to supplement the family's income from student loans. When this was refused, she complained to my office.

One of the benefits of an Ombudsman investigation is that we are able to apply hindsight to the circumstances of complaints.

We learned that social assistance cannot be provided to "top-up" student loans except in very limited circumstances that did not apply to Geraldine. And even if Geraldine's circumstances had allowed, that extra assistance could only be provided if the education plan was approved in advance by the department. Geraldine had not even consulted Social Services before she pursued and undertook her plan. Therefore, in the sense that the department had considered and properly applied all relevant policies, its decision to decline Geraldine's application for assistance was in order.

But that didn't end the matter for me and my staff. One of the benefits of an Ombudsman investigation is that we are able to apply hindsight to the circumstances of complaints. It appeared unlikely that the department would have approved Geraldine's plan if she had sought their advance approval. The department does not support training at private schools and, in any event, it had already concluded that Geraldine was not able to complete training courses. However, hindsight showed that Geraldine did complete the course and her prospects for obtaining employment and getting off assistance were greatly improved. This established that, however sound the department's reasons for not

offering training would have appeared at the time, we now knew that those reasons were not sound. I thought that this hindsight knowledge was relevant to a resolution of Geraldine's complaint.

It seemed to me that Geraldine had established, in effect, that her training plan should have been approved if she had presented it. It was a fact that the department was also a beneficiary of her efforts; Geraldine was off assistance for the time she took the course and the chances of her going off assistance permanently were enhanced. Given this, it seemed to me that the department should consider providing the supplemental assistance Geraldine had requested.

This recommendation caused problems for the department. The provisions of supplemental assistance for student loan recipients is inconsistent with overall social assistance policy and, in any event, the department is not funded to provide such assistance to all people in receipt of student loans. The department did not want to set a precedent with Geraldine which might lead to unmanageable and unwarranted expenditures for others. I accepted that this was a valid concern but suggested that the precedent, if it be one, could be reasonably limited to individuals who were long-term social assistance recipients and situations where, therefore, the provision of supplemental assistance would benefit not only the recipient but also the department.

The department declined to accept this suggestion.

After lengthy consideration, the department declined to accept this suggestion. Instead, the departments of social services and post-secondary education concluded that they would more carefully examine student loan applications and consider whether the requested loan, together with other resources, would be adequate to cover basic needs. If not, the loan would be declined.

I am uncertain about the impact that this kind of oversight will have on those who apply for student loans. I have not yet been requested to examine the new practice and will refrain from comment until I have done so.

Unfounded Suspicions

After long service in the provincial civil service, employees look forward to equitable retirement benefits. The 1990s saw government offer several early retirement programs that significantly enhanced retirement benefits for eligible employees. In every case, some employees did not quite meet the criteria and in every case, some of them thought that the early retirement program was unfair. Kirk was one of those people.

Kirk thought that the administration of one of the retirement programs was unfair from the beginning, not only in his case but across government. The retirement program that he missed was named the Restricted Retirement Option. This program was "available to employees whose age plus years of pensionable service is equal to or greater than 80 and whose job is abolished or who are matched with an individual in a comparable position whose job is being abolished" (Departmental Guide for Staff Reductions). The benefits of this program were substantial, including, among other benefits, a bridging benefit of \$350 per month to age 65.

Kirk was convinced that some employers were "tinkering" with staffing.

Kirk believed that the program gave the employer an ability to exercise its preference in deciding which jobs were abolished. Kirk was convinced that some employers were "tinkering" with staffing to get benefits for favoured employees or to get rid of troublesome ones. This, Kirk

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KUDOS

A pat on the back for Bob McCann,
Saskatoon City Area Office,
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who could have said "No" but opted to
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said, was unfair. He conceded, however, that he couldn't provide examples where the program had been abused.

The Public Service Commission, recognizing the possibility that positions could be manipulated and the program abused, advised all permanent heads that it would not support budget submissions for the staffing of functions that had been deleted, nor would it reclassify individuals to assume those deleted duties. In other words, if an employer tried to do what Kirk alleged (for example, extend the program to a favoured employee by abolishing his position), the employer would have to live with the consequences of that decision for a long time because he would not likely be able to "re-create" the position by funding a new one or reclassifying an existing one.

We were aware that others shared Kirk's concerns. Our investigation of the program's administration at the agency where Kirk worked, however, revealed no evidence that the program was being manipulated or abused as he had claimed. We heard stories about abuses in other departments, but the stories were too vague to investigate. In the end, we concluded that although there might be some for whom the program was a lifeline, the Public Service Commission seemed to have been effective in preventing it.

We advised Kirk of this and that, although he had missed the benefits of the program, he did receive exactly what he had always been entitled to. I expect this was small consolation after missing the prize.

Top Ten List

In each of my Annual Reports, I have provided a listing of the ten agencies against whom the most complaints were lodged in the reported year. The list for 1999 is not substantially different than the list for previous years and, as I have commented before, I do not anticipate much movement among the major players. While the information provided is available through an examination of the graphs, charts and statistical tables elsewhere in the report, I provide the list as a quick reference for my readers.

	1998	1999
1. Health Services	10	1
2. Health Services	10	2
3. Health Services	10	3
4. Health Services	10	4
5. Health Services	10	5
6. Health Services	10	6
7. Health Services	10	7
8. Health Services	10	8
9. Health Services	10	9
10. Health Services	10	10



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	Number of complaints	1998 standing
1. Department of Justice	687	1
2. Department of Social Services	623	2
3. Saskatchewan Government Insurance	260	3
4. Workers' Compensation Board	166	4
5. SaskPower	96	5
6. SaskTel	80	6
7. Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission	49	8
8. SaskEnergy	42	10
9. Municipal Affairs, Culture and Housing	36	New
10. Department of Health	34	7

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**Complaints RECEIVED Against Saskatchewan Departments, Boards,
Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies - 1999**

Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies	1999 Total	1998 Total
Departments		
Agriculture & Food		
General	2	3
Lands Branch	8	9
Livestock & Veterinary Operations Branch	4	2
Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation	8	11
Economic & Co-operative Development	2	0
Education		
General	0	1
Curriculum & Instruction Branch	0	1
Student Services	1	0
Energy & Mines	1	1
Environment & Resource Management		
General	0	17
Environmental Protection Division	1	0
Fish & Wildlife Branch	1	1
Executive Council	1	1
Finance		
General	2	0
Municipal Employees' Pension Plan	1	0
Public Employees' Benefits Agency	8	8
Revenue Division	7	6
Saskatchewan Pension Plan	1	1
Health		
General	9	7
Acute & Emergency Services Branch	1	0
Alcohol & Drug Services	0	1
Community Care Branch	0	3
Drug Plan & Extended Health Benefits Branch	9	8
Medical Services & Health Registration Branch	7	11
Mental Health Services	4	6
Population Health Branch	1	0
Saskatchewan Aids to Independent Living	2	0
Vital Statistics	1	4
Highways & Transportation		
General	2	6
Operations Division	1	1
Regional Offices Branch - Maintenance	8	1

**Complaints RECEIVED Against Saskatchewan Departments, Boards,
Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies - 1999**

Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies	1998 Total	1999 Total
Departments		
Justice		
General	12	15
Corporations Branch	4	2
Corrections Division		
General	12	4
Battlefords Community Correctional Centre	0	4
Community Operations Branch - Probation	18	15
Community Training Residences (CTR)	7	13
Northern Region (Besnard Lake, Buffalo Narrows, Waden Bay)	0	7
Pine Grove Correctional Centre	30	53
Prince Albert Correctional Centre	107	103
Prince Albert Healing Lodge	2	1
Regina Correctional Centre	104	153
Saskatoon Correctional Centre	177	138
Courts, Sheriffs	8	19
Family Law Division Services	1	0
Land Titles	0	3
Licensing & Investigations Section	2	0
Maintenance Enforcement Office	114	87
Mediation Services	1	0
Public Prosecutions	3	5
Public Trustee	0	8
Rentalsman/Provincial Mediation Board	14	26
Saskatchewan Police Commission	0	1
Victim Services	4	3
Labour		
General	0	0
Labour Relations, Mediation & Conciliation Branch	2	2
Labour Standards Branch	10	13
Occupational Health & Safety Division	0	4
Office of the Worker's Advocate	0	2
Municipal Affairs, Culture & Housing		
General	4	4
Building Standards Branch	0	1
Community Support Services Branch	1	0
Housing, Protection Services & Facilities Division	29	19
Northern Municipal Services	2	0
Post-Secondary Education & Skills Training		
General	1	0
Career Services Unit	2	1
Provincial Training Allowance	0	2
Regional Services Branch	4	2
Student Financial Assistance Unit	17	31
Training & Employment Programs Branch	2	1

Complaints RECEIVED Against Saskatchewan Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies - 1999

Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies	1999 Total	1998 Total
Departments		
Agriculture & Food		
General	2	3
Lands Branch	8	9
Livestock & Veterinary Operations Branch	4	2
Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation	6	11
Economic & Co-operative Development	2	0
Education		
General	0	1
Curriculum & Instruction Branch	0	1
Student Services	1	0
Energy & Mines	1	1
Environment & Resource Management		
General	9	17
Environmental Protection Division	1	0
Fish & Wildlife Branch	1	1
Executive Council	1	1
Finance		
General	2	0
Municipal Employees' Pension Plan	1	0
Public Employees' Benefits Agency	5	8
Revenue Division	7	6
Saskatchewan Pension Plan	1	1
Health		
General	9	7
Acute & Emergency Services Branch	1	0
Alcohol & Drug Services	0	1
Community Care Branch	0	3
Drug Plan & Extended Health Benefits Branch	9	8
Medical Services & Health Registration Branch	7	11
Mental Health Services	4	6
Population Health Branch	1	0
Saskatchewan Aids to Independent Living	2	0
Vital Statistics	1	4
Highways & Transportation		
General	2	6
Operations Division	1	1
Regional Offices Branch - Maintenance	5	1

Complaints RECEIVED Against Saskatchewan Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies - 1999

Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies	1999 Total	1998 Total
Departments		
Justice		
General	12	15
Corporations Branch	4	2
Corrections Division		
General	12	4
Battlefords Community Correctional Centre	0	4
Community Operations Branch - Probation	15	15
Community Training Residences (CTR)	7	13
Northern Region (Besnard Lake, Buffalo Narrows, Waden Bay)	6	7
Pine Grove Correctional Centre	30	53
Prince Albert Correctional Centre	107	103
Prince Albert Healing Lodge	2	1
Regina Correctional Centre	154	153
Saskatoon Correctional Centre	177	138
Courts, Sheriffs	6	19
Family Law Division Services	1	0
Land Titles	8	3
Licensing & Investigations Section	2	0
Maintenance Enforcement Office	114	87
Mediation Services	1	0
Public Prosecutions	3	5
Public Trustee	8	8
Rentalsman/Provincial Mediation Board	14	26
Saskatchewan Police Commission	0	1
Victim Services	4	3
Labour		
General	0	0
Labour Relations, Mediation & Conciliation Branch	2	2
Labour Standards Branch	10	13
Occupational Health & Safety Division	0	4
Office of the Worker's Advocate	0	2
Municipal Affairs, Culture & Housing		
General	4	4
Building Standards Branch	0	1
Community Support Services Branch	1	0
Housing, Protection Services & Facilities Division	29	19
Northern Municipal Services	2	0
Post-Secondary Education & Skills Training		
General	1	0
Career Services Unit	2	1
Provincial Training Allowance	5	2
Regional Services Branch	4	2
Student Financial Assistance Unit	17	31
Training & Employment Programs Branch	2	1

**Complaints RECEIVED Against Saskatchewan Departments, Boards,
Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies - 1999**

Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies	1999 Total	1998 Total
Departments		
Social Services		
General	11	9
Adoption Registry & Post Adoption Services	3	0
Building Independence Program	24	11
Child Day Care Division	1	3
Community Living Division	5	2
Family & Youth Services Division	48	41
Income Security Division	532	530
Paul Dojack Youth Centre	0	2
Valley View Centre	1	1
Young Offenders Program Branch	0	2
Boards		
District Health Boards		
Battlefords District Health Board	0	5
Mamawetan Churchill District Health Board	1	0
Moose Jaw Thunder Creek District Health Board	1	3
Parkland District Health Board	2	4
Pasqua District Health Board	1	1
Pipestone District Health Board	0	2
Prince Albert District Health Board	1	1
Regina District Health Board	12	10
Saskatoon District Health Board	6	8
South Central District Health Board	1	0
South East District Health Board	1	1
South West District Health Board	0	1
Swift Current District Health Board	2	2
Touchwood Qu'Appelle District Health Board	1	0
Farm Land Security Board	1	1
Farm Tenure Arbitration Board	0	1
Highway Traffic Board	5	1
Labour Relations Board	3	0
Lands Appeal Board	1	0
Municipal Housing Authority		
General	5	0
Regina	0	1
Saskatoon	3	3
All Others	1	2
Rates Appeal Board	3	0
Saskatchewan Municipal Board		
General	0	2
Assessment Appeals Committee	4	8
Social Services Appeal Board	17	7
Surface Rights Arbitration Board	1	1
Water Appeal Board	1	4
Workers' Compensation Board	168	162

Complaints RECEIVED Against Saskatchewan Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies - 1999

Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies	1999 Total	1998 Total
Commissions		
Public Service Commission	4	2
Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission	19	6
Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission	49	45
Saskatchewan Securities Commission	1	2
Crown Corporations		
Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan	3	5
Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan	0	1
Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation	0	1
Saskatchewan Government Insurance		
General	29	22
Auto Fund	38	55
Claims Division	193	175
Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science & Technology (SIAST)	3	9
Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation	0	2
Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation	0	3
Saskatchewan Transportation Company	2	3
Saskatchewan Water Corporation	7	15
SaskEnergy	42	34
SaskPower	96	144
SaskTel	80	65
Agencies		
Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency	1	4
Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority		
General	2	2
Liquor & Gaming Licensing Commission	3	5
Saskatchewan Police Complaints Investigator	2	0
Saskatchewan Research Council	1	1
Totals	2,298	2,283

Complaints RECEIVED Against Saskatchewan Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies - 1999

Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies	1999 Total	1998 Total
Departments		
Social Services		
General	11	9
Adoption Registry & Post Adoption Services	3	0
Building Independence Program	24	11
Child Day Care Division	1	3
Community Living Division	5	2
Family & Youth Services Division	43	41
Income Security Division	322	530
Paul Dojack Youth Centre	0	2
Valley View Centre	1	1
Young Offenders Program Branch	0	2
Boards		
District Health Boards		
Battlefords District Health Board	0	5
Mamawetan Churchill District Health Board	1	0
Moose Jaw Thunder Creek District Health Board	1	3
Parkland District Health Board	2	4
Pasqua District Health Board	1	1
Pipestone District Health Board	0	2
Prince Albert District Health Board	1	1
Regina District Health Board	12	10
Saskatoon District Health Board	0	8
South Central District Health Board	1	0
South East District Health Board	1	1
South West District Health Board	0	1
Swift Current District Health Board	2	2
Touchwood Qu'Appelle District Health Board	1	0
Farm Land Security Board	1	1
Farm Tenure Arbitration Board	0	1
Highway Traffic Board	2	1
Labour Relations Board	2	0
Lands Appeal Board	1	0
Municipal Housing Authority		
General	5	0
Regina	0	1
Saskatoon	2	3
All Others	1	2
Rates Appeal Board	3	0
Saskatchewan Municipal Board		
General	0	2
Assessment Appeals Committee	4	6
Social Services Appeal Board	17	7
Surface Rights Arbitration Board	1	1
Water Appeal Board	1	4
Workers' Compensation Board	100	162

Complaints RECEIVED Against Saskatchewan Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies - 1999

Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies	1999 Total	1998 Total
Commissions		
Public Service Commission	4	2
Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission	19	6
Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission	49	45
Saskatchewan Securities Commission	1	2
Crown Corporations		
Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan	3	5
Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan	0	1
Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation	0	1
Saskatchewan Government Insurance		
General	29	22
Auto Fund	38	55
Claims Division	193	175
Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science & Technology (SIAST)	3	9
Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation	0	2
Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation	0	3
Saskatchewan Transportation Company	2	3
Saskatchewan Water Corporation	7	15
SaskEnergy	42	34
SaskPower	90	144
SaskTel	80	65
Agencies		
Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency	1	4
Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority		
General	2	2
Liquor & Gaming Licensing Commission	3	5
Saskatchewan Police Complaints Investigator	2	0
Saskatchewan Research Council	1	1
Totals	2,298	2,283

**Complaints CLOSED Against Saskatchewan Departments, Boards,
Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies - 1999**

Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies	Resolved	Not Substantiated	No Jurisdiction	Discontinued	Assistance Rendered	1999 Total	1998 Total
Departments							
Agriculture & Food							
General	-	-	-	1	-	1	3
Lands Branch**	-	2	-	1	1	4	6
Livestock & Veterinary Operations Branch**	1	-	-	-	2	3	1
Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation**	1	2	-	-	1	5	12
Economic Development & Co-operation	-	-	1	1	-	2	0
Education							
General	-	1	-	-	1	2	2
Curriculum & Instruction Branch	-	-	-	-	-	0	1
Official Minority Language Office	-	-	-	-	-	0	1
Student Services	-	-	-	-	1	1	0
Energy & Mines	-	1	-	1	-	2	1
Environment & Resource Management							
General**	1	-	-	2	4	11	12
Environmental Protection Branch	-	1	-	-	-	1	1
Fish & Wildlife Branch	-	-	-	-	1	1	1
Executive Council	-	-	1	-	-	1	1
Finance							
General	-	2	-	-	1	3	1
Municipal Employees' Pension Plan	-	-	-	-	1	1	0
Public Employees' Benefits Agency	3	2	-	-	4	9	10
Revenue Division	1	-	-	3	1	5	8
Saskatchewan Pension Plan	-	-	-	-	1	1	1
Health							
General	-	1	1	1	5	8	7
Acute & Emergency Services Branch	-	-	1	-	-	1	0
Alcohol & Drug Services	-	-	-	-	-	0	1
Community Care Branch	-	-	-	-	-	0	3
Drug Plan & Extended Health	1	2	-	1	6	10	8
Benefits Branch							
Medical Services & Health Registration Branch	1	2	-	1	4	8	9
Mental Health Services	-	1	-	-	2	3	6
Saskatchewan Aids to Independent Living	1	-	-	1	-	2	0
Vital Statistics	-	-	-	-	1	1	7
Highways & Transportation							
General**	-	-	-	1	-	2	7
Operations Division	-	-	-	-	-	0	2
Regional Offices Branch - Maintenance**	-	1	-	1	2	5	2

Complaints CLOSED Against Saskatchewan Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies - 1999

Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies	Resolved	Not Substantiated	No Jurisdiction	Discontinued	Assistance Rendered	1999 Total	1998 Total
Departments							
Justice							
General	-	-	3	2	5	10	16
Corporations Branch	1	-	-	1	2	4	2
Corrections Division							
General	4	3	-	2	3	12	3
Community Operations/Probation**	-	-	2	3	8	14	15
Community Training Residences (CTR)	1	1	-	3	4	9	12
Correctional Centres							
Battlefords Community Correctional Centre	-	-	-	-	-	0	4
Northern Region (Besnard Lake, Buffalo Narrows, Waden Bay)	3	-	-	-	3	6	7
Pine Grove Correctional Centre	4	3	-	2	23	32	50
Prince Albert Correctional Centre**	11	14	1	12	67	108	100
Prince Albert Healing Lodge**	1	-	-	-	-	2	1
Regina Correctional Centre**	32	18	6	35	71	163	154
Saskatoon Correctional Centre**	17	16	4	20	113	173	140
Courts/Sheriffs	-	-	1	-	3	5	19
Family Law Division Services	-	-	-	1	-	1	0
Land Titles**	1	-	-	-	7	9	3
Licensing & Investigations Section	-	-	-	-	1	1	0
Maintenance Enforcement Office**	6	4	3	8	88	117	88
Mediation Services	-	-	-	-	1	1	0
Public Prosecutions	-	-	2	1	-	3	5
Public Trustee**	-	-	-	2	3	6	12
Rentalsman/Provincial Mediation Board	-	2	2	3	8	15	28
Saskatchewan Police Commission	-	-	-	-	-	0	1
Victim Services	2	-	-	-	4	6	8
Labour							
Labour Relations, Mediation & Conciliation Branch	-	-	2	-	-	2	2
Labour Standards Branch	-	2	-	-	7	9	15
Occupational Health & Safety Division	-	-	-	-	-	0	4
Office of the Worker's Advocate	-	-	-	-	-	0	1
Municipal Affairs, Culture & Housing							
General**	-	-	1	-	1	3	6
Community Support Services Branch	-	-	1	-	-	1	0
Housing, Protection Services & Facilities Division**	1	2	1	4	18	27	20
Northern Municipal Services	1	-	-	-	1	2	0

Complaints CLOSED Against Saskatchewan Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies - 1999

Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies	Resolved	Not Substantiated	No Jurisdiction	Discontinued	Assistance Rendered	1999 Total	1998 Total
Departments							
Agriculture & Food							
General	-	-	-	1	-	1	3
Lands Branch**	-	2	-	1	1	6	6
Livestock & Veterinary Operations Branch**	1	-	-	-	2	3	1
Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation**	1	2	-	-	1	5	12
Economic Development & Co-operation	-	-	1	1	-	2	0
Education							
General	-	1	-	-	1	2	2
Curriculum & Instruction Branch	-	-	-	-	-	0	1
Official Minority Language Office	-	-	-	-	-	0	1
Student Services	-	-	-	-	1	1	0
Energy & Mines	-	1	-	1	-	2	1
Environment & Resource Management							
General**	1	-	-	2	4	11	12
Environmental Protection Branch	-	1	-	-	-	1	1
Fish & Wildlife Branch	-	-	-	-	1	1	1
Executive Council	-	-	1	-	-	1	1
Finance							
General	-	2	-	-	1	3	1
Municipal Employees' Pension Plan	-	-	-	-	1	1	0
Public Employees' Benefits Agency	3	2	-	-	4	9	10
Revenue Division	1	-	-	3	1	5	8
Saskatchewan Pension Plan	-	-	-	-	1	1	1
Health							
General	-	1	1	1	5	8	7
Acute & Emergency Services Branch	-	-	1	-	-	1	0
Alcohol & Drug Services	-	-	-	-	-	0	1
Community Care Branch	-	-	-	-	-	0	3
Drug Plan & Extended Health	1	2	-	1	6	10	8
Benefits Branch							
Medical Services & Health Registration Branch	1	2	-	1	4	8	9
Mental Health Services	-	1	-	-	2	3	6
Saskatchewan Aids to Independent Living	1	-	-	1	-	2	0
Vital Statistics	-	-	-	-	1	1	7
Highways & Transportation							
General**	-	-	-	1	-	2	7
Operations Division	-	-	-	-	-	0	2
Regional Offices Branch - Maintenance**	-	1	-	1	2	5	2

Complaints CLOSED Against Saskatchewan Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies - 1999

Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies

	Resolved	Not Substantiated	No Jurisdiction	Discontinued	Assistance Rendered	1999 Total	1998 Total
Departments							
Justice							
General	-	-	3	2	5	10	16
Corporations Branch	1	-	-	1	2	4	2
Corrections Division							
General	4	3	-	2	3	12	3
Community Operations/Probation**	-	-	2	3	8	14	15
Community Training Residences (CTR)	1	1	-	3	4	9	12
Correctional Centres							
Battlefords Community Correctional Centre	-	-	-	-	-	0	4
Northern Region (Besnard Lake, Buffalo Narrows, Waden Bay)	3	-	-	-	3	6	7
Pine Grove Correctional Centre	4	3	-	2	23	32	50
Prince Albert Correctional Centre**	11	14	1	12	67	106	100
Prince Albert Healing Lodge**	1	-	-	-	-	2	1
Regina Correctional Centre**	32	18	6	35	71	163	154
Saskatoon Correctional Centre**	17	16	4	20	113	173	140
Courts/Sheriffs	-	-	1	-	3	5	19
Family Law Division Services	-	-	-	1	-	1	0
Land Titles**	1	-	-	-	7	9	3
Licensing & Investigations Section	-	-	-	-	1	1	0
Maintenance Enforcement Office**	6	4	3	8	88	117	88
Mediation Services	-	-	-	-	1	1	0
Public Prosecutions	-	-	2	1	-	3	5
Public Trustee**	-	-	-	2	3	6	12
Rentalsman/Provincial Mediation Board	-	2	2	3	8	15	28
Saskatchewan Police Commission	-	-	-	-	-	0	1
Victim Services	2	-	-	-	4	6	8
Labour							
Labour Relations, Mediation & Conciliation Branch	-	-	2	-	-	2	2
Labour Standards Branch	-	2	-	-	7	9	15
Occupational Health & Safety Division	-	-	-	-	-	0	4
Office of the Worker's Advocate	-	-	-	-	-	0	1
Municipal Affairs, Culture & Housing							
General**	-	-	1	-	1	3	6
Community Support Services Branch	-	-	1	-	-	1	0
Housing, Protection Services & Facilities Division**	1	2	1	4	18	27	20
Northern Municipal Services	1	-	-	-	1	2	0

Complaints CLOSED Against Saskatchewan Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies - 1999

Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies

	Resolved	Not Substantiated	No Jurisdiction	Discontinued	Assistance Rendered	1999 Total	1998
Departments							
Post-Secondary Education & Skills Training							
General	-	-	-	-	1	1	0
Career Services Unit	-	-	1	1	-	2	1
Institutions Branch	-	1	-	-	-	1	0
Provincial Training Allowance	-	-	1	1	4	6	1
Regional Services Branch**	-	-	-	-	3	4	2
Student Financial Assistance Unit**	2	-	2	2	11	17	33
Training & Employment Programs Branch	-	-	-	1	1	2	1
Social Services							
General	2	-	-	2	6	10	9
Adoption Registry & Post Adoption Services	-	-	-	-	1	3	0
Building Independence Program	3	1	-	-	21	26	9
Child Day Care Division	1	-	-	-	1	2	4
Community Living Division	1	2	-	2	2	7	5
Family & Youth Services Division**	4	4	7	7	23	50	38
Income Security Program**	48	10	8	16	435	527	541
Paul Dojack Youth Centre	1	-	-	-	-	1	1
Valley View Centre**	-	-	-	-	1	1	1
Young Offenders Program Branch	1	-	-	-	-	1	1
Boards							
District Health Boards							
Battlefords District Health Board	-	-	-	-	-	0	5
Mamawetan Churchill District Health Board	-	-	-	-	1	1	0
Moose Jaw Thunder Creek District Health Board	-	-	-	-	1	1	2
Parkland District Health Board**	-	-	-	-	1	2	3
Pasqua District Health Board	-	-	1	-	-	1	1
Pipestone District Health Board	-	-	-	-	-	0	2
Prince Albert District Health Board	1	-	-	-	-	1	1
Regina District Health Board**	-	2	2	2	4	13	10
Saskatoon District Health Board	1	1	1	1	4	8	6
South Central District Health Board	-	-	-	-	1	1	0
South East District Health Board**	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
South West District Health Board	-	-	-	-	-	0	1
Swift Current District Health Board	2	-	1	-	-	3	0
Touchwood Qu'Appelle District Health Board	-	-	1	-	-	1	0
Farm Land Security Board**	-	-	-	1	-	1	1
Farm Tenure Arbitration Board	-	-	-	-	-	0	1
Highway Traffic Board	-	1	-	2	1	5	9
Labour Relations Board	-	-	1	1	1	3	0

Complaints CLOSED Against Saskatchewan Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies - 1999

Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies	Resolved	Not Substantiated	No Jurisdiction	Discontinued	Assistance Rendered	1999 Total	1998
Boards							
Municipal Housing Authority							
General	-	-	1	2	2	5	0
Regina	-	2	-	-	-	2	1
Saskatoon**	-	-	-	-	-	3	3
All Others**	-	1	-	-	-	1	3
Rates Appeal Board	-	-	-	1	-	1	2
Saskatchewan Municipal Board							
General	-	-	-	1	-	1	2
Assessment Appeals Committee	-	1	1	-	1	3	4
Local Government Committee	-	-	-	-	-	0	1
Planning Appeals Committee	-	-	-	-	-	0	1
Social Services Appeal Board**	-	8	2	2	-	13	18
Surface Rights Arbitration Board	-	-	1	-	-	1	4
Water Appeal Board	-	-	-	-	1	1	4
Workers' Compensation Board	18	28	1	13	118	181	166
Commissions							
Public Service Commission	-	2	1	1	-	4	3
Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission	-	4	-	3	2	9	5
Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission	2	6	2	6	29	45	47
Saskatchewan Securities Commission	-	-	-	-	1	1	2
Crown Corporations							
Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan**	-	1	-	1	1	4	5
Crown Investment Corporation of Saskatchewan	-	-	-	-	-	0	2
Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation	-	-	-	-	2	2	1
Saskatchewan Government Insurance							
General**	4	1	2	4	17	31	24
Auto Fund**	7	4	4	4	27	46	68
Claims Division**	8	24	5	21	120	187	189
Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science & Technology (SIASST)	-	1	-	-	-	3	10
Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation	-	-	-	-	-	0	2
Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation	-	-	-	-	-	0	3

Complaints CLOSED Against Saskatchewan Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies - 1999

Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies

	Resolved	Not Substantiated	No Jurisdiction	Discontinued	Assistance Rendered	1999 Total	1998
Departments							
Post-Secondary Education & Skills Training							
General	-	-	-	-	1	1	0
Career Services Unit	-	-	1	1	-	2	1
Institutions Branch	-	1	-	-	-	1	0
Provincial Training Allowance	-	-	1	1	4	6	1
Regional Services Branch**	-	-	-	-	3	4	2
Student Financial Assistance Unit**	2	-	2	2	11	17	33
Training & Employment Programs Branch	-	-	-	1	1	2	1
Social Services							
General	2	-	-	2	6	10	9
Adoption Registry & Post Adoption Services	-	-	-	-	1	1	0
Building Independence Program	3	1	-	-	21	25	9
Child Day Care Division	1	-	-	-	1	2	4
Community Living Division	1	2	-	2	2	7	5
Family & Youth Services Division**	4	4	7	7	23	50	38
Income Security Program**	48	10	8	16	435	527	541
Paul Dojack Youth Centre	1	-	-	-	-	1	1
Valley View Centre**	-	-	-	-	1	1	1
Young Offenders Program Branch	1	-	-	-	-	1	1
Boards							
District Health Boards							
Battlefords District Health Board	-	-	-	-	-	0	5
Mamawetan Churchill District Health Board	-	-	-	-	1	1	0
Moose Jaw Thunder Creek District Health Board	-	-	-	-	1	1	2
Parkland District Health Board**	-	-	-	-	1	1	3
Pasqua District Health Board	-	-	1	-	-	1	1
Pipestone District Health Board	-	-	-	-	-	0	2
Prince Albert District Health Board	1	-	-	-	-	1	1
Regina District Health Board**	-	2	2	2	4	10	10
Saskatoon District Health Board	1	1	1	1	4	8	6
South Central District Health Board	-	-	-	-	1	1	0
South East District Health Board**	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
South West District Health Board	-	-	-	-	-	0	1
Swift Current District Health Board	2	-	1	-	-	3	0
Touchwood Qu'Appelle District Health Board	-	-	1	-	-	1	0
Farm Land Security Board**	-	-	-	1	-	1	1
Farm Tenure Arbitration Board	-	-	-	-	-	0	1
Highway Traffic Board	-	1	-	2	1	5	9
Labour Relations Board	-	-	1	1	1	3	0

Complaints CLOSED Against Saskatchewan Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies - 1999

Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies	Resolved	Not Substantiated	No Jurisdiction	Discontinued	Assistance Rendered	1999 Total	1998
Boards							
Municipal Housing Authority							
General	-	-	1	2	2	5	0
Regina	-	2	-	-	-	2	1
Saskatoon**	-	-	-	-	-	3	3
All Others**	-	1	-	-	-	1	3
Rates Appeal Board	-	-	-	1	-	1	2
Saskatchewan Municipal Board							
General	-	-	-	1	-	1	2
Assessment Appeals Committee	-	1	1	-	1	3	4
Local Government Committee	-	-	-	-	-	0	1
Planning Appeals Committee	-	-	-	-	-	0	1
Social Services Appeal Board**	-	8	2	2	-	13	18
Surface Rights Arbitration Board	-	-	1	-	-	1	4
Water Appeal Board	-	-	-	-	1	1	4
Workers' Compensation Board	16	28	1	13	118	181	166
Commissions							
Public Service Commission	-	2	1	1	-	4	3
Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission	-	4	-	3	2	9	5
Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission	2	6	2	6	29	45	47
Saskatchewan Securities Commission	-	-	-	-	1	1	2
Crown Corporations							
Agricultural Credit Corporation of Saskatchewan**	-	1	-	1	1	4	5
Crown Investment Corporation of Saskatchewan	-	-	-	-	-	0	2
Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation	-	-	-	-	2	2	1
Saskatchewan Government Insurance							
General**	4	1	2	4	17	31	24
Auto Fund**	7	4	4	4	27	46	68
Claims Division**	8	24	5	21	120	187	189
Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science & Technology (SIAST)	-	1	-	-	-	3	10
Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation	-	-	-	-	-	0	2
Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation	-	-	-	-	-	0	3

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Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies	Resolved	Not Substantiated	No Jurisdiction	Discontinued	Assistance Rendered	1999 Total	1998
Crown Corporations							
Saskatchewan Transportation Company	1	1	1	-	-	3	3
Saskatchewan Water Corporation	1	2	1	-	3	7	12
SaskEnergy**	7	1	1	8	26	44	36
SaskPower**	14	8	3	7	57	100	155
SaskTel	10	3	2	12	46	73	64
Agencies							
Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency	-	-	-	-	-	0	4
Saskatchewan Liquor & Gaming Authority							
General	-	-	-	-	-	0	2
Liquor & Gaming Licensing Commission	-	-	1	1	2	4	6
Saskatchewan Police Complaints Investigator	-	-	1	-	-	1	0
Saskatchewan Research Council**	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Totals	234	203	89	240	1,459	2,221	1,373

** Please note the total figures of these departments include files that have been closed through Alternative Case Resolution.

1999

Total Complaints RECEIVED Against**Saskatchewan Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations and Agencies**

	Against Saskatchewan Departments, Boards, etc.	Not Against Saskatchewan Departments, Boards, etc.	Total
January	140	155	295
February	228	185	408
March	231	216	447
April	240	179	418
May	157	139	296
June	212	178	390
July	190	164	354
August	168	160	328
September	151	138	289
October	188	174	362
November	242	141	383
December	155	164	320
1999 Totals	2,298	1,993	4,291

1999

Complaints Other Than Against Saskatchewan**Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies**

Category	Regina	Saskatoon	Total	%
Children's Advocate Referrals	7	28	35	1.8
Consumer	305	265	570	28.6
Courts/Legal	39	62	101	5.0
Family	5	7	12	.6
Federal	132	194	326	16.4
Local Government	43	77	120	6.0
Medical	7	26	33	1.7
Other	404	286	690	34.6
Private	41	33	74	3.7
Professional	21	10	31	1.6
Totals	1,004	988	1,992	100

Complaints CLOSED Against Saskatchewan Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies - 1999

Departments, Boards, Commissions, Crown Corporations, and Agencies	Resolved	Not Substantiated	No Jurisdiction	Discontinued	Assistance Rendered	1999 Total	1998
Crown Corporations							
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Agencies							
Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency	-	-	-	-	-	0	4
Saskatchewan Liquor & Gaming Authority							
General	-	-	-	-	-	0	2
Liquor & Gaming Licensing Commission	-	-	1	1	2	4	6
Saskatchewan Police Complaints Investigator	-	-	1	-	-	1	0
Saskatchewan Research Council**	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Totals	234	203	89	240	1,459	2,321	1,373

** Please note the total figures of these departments include files that have been closed through Alternative Case Resolution

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